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ABSTRACT

This report is a transcript of presentations from the 1980 Conference on Home-School Alliances, defined as specific coordination strategies between home and school, and developed to further the social and academic development of children and youths. Following the preface, brief overview of the purpose and nature of the conference, and the introductory speeches, five local home-school alliance programs are described: the Peralta Year Round School, Oakland, California (a public alternative elementary school); the Home Curriculum Program, Detroit, Michigan (emphasizing reading improvement); the Parents Can Be Tutors Program, Miami, Florida (serving children whose parents have limited English speaking ability); the Home-School Basic Skills Program, Arlington, Virginia (assisting black children to meet state competency requirements); and the Bilingual Training Institute for Parents, San Antonio, Texas (serving Spanish speaking or bilingual families). A third section presents descriptions of federal programs: the Basic Skills Improvement Program; the Emergency School Aid Program; Title VII Bilingual Education programs; Office of Special Education programs; and the Federal Parent Involvement study. A panel discussion of the program presentations focusing on implications, reports from small group discussions on issues pertinent to home-school alliances, and a discussion of issues and perspectives concerning the development of home-school alliance programs are also included. The four appendices contain information on salient features of local programs, comments from local program directors, a list of conference participants, and the conference agenda. (WAS)

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HOME- SCHOOL ALLIANCES:

APPROACHES TO INCREASING PARENT INVOLVEMENT IN CHILDREN'S LEARNING IN UPPER ELEMENTARY AND JUNIOR HIGH SCHOOLS (GRADES 4-9)

A CONFERENCE REPORT

OCTOBER 5-7, 1980

Daniel Safran, Editor

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF EDUCATION
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PREFACE

During the past two decades, a consensus has emerged to support the strengthening of partnerships between home and school. There tends to be less controversy today than there was in the 1950's and 60's about the value of increasing the role of parents as educators of their own children. In fact, some of the early restrictions and admonitions about parent involvement now appear inconceivable.

In the mid 1960's national legislation promoted "maximum feasible participation" by the persons served in a variety of federally funded human services programs. Perhaps the best publicized of these efforts was Project Head Start, a preschool program which encouraged parents to become involved as tutors, volunteers, paraprofessional employees and decision-makers. Specific guidelines were established and training was provided to insure that parent involvement was carried out. In subsequent years, other federal education programs extended the concept of parent involvement beyond the preschool level. Among these programs were Project Follow Through and Title I and VII (Bilingual Education) of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act.

Building upon these federal initiatives, states began to pass legislation requiring parent involvement in state-funded education programs. By the early 1970's slightly more than one-fourth of the states had laws mandating parent involvement and more than one-third of the state education agencies had formal administrative regulations requiring the involvement of parents

in some aspect of their children's schooling.

In recent years education professional organizations have given increasing attention to parent involvement. National conferences have featured sessions on how to work with parents at home and how to involve parents in school governance issues. The 1978 Presidential Address to the Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development urged educators to "look to the community as a resource" and recognize the crucial role parents play in the educational process.

The greatest commitment to parent involvement from professionals continues to come from early childhood educators. In the 1972 Yearbook of the National Society for the Study of Education - devoted to Early Childhood Education- parent involvement is described as "vital to child development."

Unfortunately, very little attention has been paid to the relationship between home and school beyond the early grades. There is no doubt among educators, parents and administrators that despite vast differences between early childhood and the latency and early adolescent years, parents still play a major role in their children's education. It is, therefore, essential that serious efforts be undertaken to assess what we know about alliances between homes and the schools serving children of these ages.

The NIE Conference on Home-School Alliances was designed to bring

together practical experience and professional and academic inquiry. The groundwork was laid by representatives of five very different local examples of home-school alliances. Broader contexts were provided by spokespersons of major federal sponsors of home-school alliances. Strengths and obstacles were then assessed from the points of view of the major "actors" in the effort to build and sustain alliances: parents; early adolescents; teachers; schools. As it concluded, the proceedings called upon the wisdom of a panel whose members spoke from the perspective of large national concerns: federal policy; the role of the states; the changing role of the family; and advocates for parents, teachers and children.

As Conference Chair and editor of these proceedings I want to express my appreciation to Dr. Cynthia Wallat of NIE for her role in conceptualizing the topic, to all of the participants for their energy and competence in sharing their personal experiences and insights, and, most of all, to Dr. Oliver Moles for his support, colleagiality and expertise in helping to plan, implement and "digest" this exciting conference.

Daniel Safran, Director
Center for the Study of
Parent Involvement
Oakland, California

AN ORIENTATION

Overview

This conference on Home-School Alliances was held at the National Institute of Education in Washington, DC on October 5-7, 1980. It drew over 30 presenters from across the country who explored various aspects of the theme: approaches to increasing parent involvement in children's learning in upper elementary and junior high schools (grades 4-9). The names and affiliations of participants are listed in an appendix.

The conference was sponsored by the NIE Families as Educators Team in order to identify the best ideas from local and national programs, and from educators, parents and researchers which could be used by others developing home-school programs for the middle grades. This Team has as its general objective increasing our understanding of family educational processes by which children learn. Among other areas, it supports research and development work to understand how home-school collaboration can improve the school achievement of children and youth.

A number of home-school programs already exist at the early elementary level, and we were anxious to take stock of the situation with somewhat older students. As children approach and move into adolescence their increased skills and independence, the changing structure of their school experience, and the uncertainties of parents and educators in dealing with youths all make home-school collaboration more problematic. Thus in our extensive search for promising local programs we sought ones which would show such collaboration not only aimed at early adolescents but also serving diverse groups using different strategies in various parts of the country. And we wanted to hear directly from parents, in their own words, about their part in the programs. The five local programs presented reflect this diversity.

The conference's central focus was on the concept of home-school alliances as one kind of parent involvement. Some discussion of our use of the term "alliances" will help to put these proceedings into context. Then the questions which guided discussion at the conference will be presented. And finally, the conference structure and subsequent activities will be noted.

Characteristics of Home-School Alliances

The term "alliance" draws attention to several features which highlight how parents and teachers or other school staff may coordinate efforts to further their common interest in the social and academic development of children and youth. Unlike terms such as school responsiveness shared responsibility, or parent involvement which often have broad meanings, the term alliance is used here to refer to specific coordination strategies between the home and school. As conceived here, alliances have the following characteristics:

1. Specific home-school program efforts directed toward improving student achievement or closely related behaviors such as attendance, school conduct or study habits.

2. Development of strategies and procedures by schools, parents or community groups to involve parents or other child caretakers in these efforts.

3. Support for parents as educators of their children in roles such as tutors, homework managers, learning motivators, coordinators of other educational resources, and co-planners with teachers of the child's educational program.

4. Finding solutions to time problems and other constraints that both educators and parents may face in developing ways of working with each other.

5. A continuous two-way flow of information between home and school by which parents and school staff work together to improve student achievement.

The home-school programs presented at this conference draw attention to alliance efforts that have been undertaken in various school settings. In each case an alliance has been developed because people have identified a problem that parent involvement could address, and have worked out specific goals, a delivery system, and parent roles.

Alliances may form in a variety of ways. The school may take the initiative to involve parents, or parents individually or collectively may approach the school. Some would argue that before parents are willing to get involved in alliances they must become organized and have a sense of power in relation to the schools. Others would say that concern for their own children's education is enough to motivate parents to work with schools in educational roles. How often and when these and other factors are necessary to the development of home-school alliances were among the topics explored during the conference.

Guiding Questions

Since a part of the mission of the National Institute of Education is to help equalize educational opportunity. The conference asked how home-school alliances can help parents bolster student achievement especially for those who are not learning well. Knowledge of promising parent involvement programs may help build other effective local programs, and pinpoint where additional information and research are needed. Against this backdrop, a set of questions were proposed for conference consideration:

1. What do we know about the charateristics of promising home-school alliances?

   - program objectives
   - program history and development
   - structure: staffing, modes of home-school contact, program activities
   - communication between home and school
   - roles for parents in encouraging student achievement
   - program resources: materials, training and technical assistance, special staff positions, administrative support, funding sources

2. How successful are the programs in meeting their objectives?

3. What seem to be the most important factors in promoting or limiting success in the following areas:

   - getting programs started
   - getting support from teachers and administrators
   - establishing communication with parents
   - strengthening parent roles in educating their children
   - improving student learning through involving parents
   - keeping the program going

4. What information about home-school alliances would be useful to others setting up similar programs? How accessible is this information?

5. What unanswered questions are there regarding the development, operation, and effectiveness of such programs?

Structure of the Report

This report is in large part a transcript of presentations made during the two main days of the conference, October 6th and 7th, 1980. Presenters were each given the opportunity to edit their comments. Most had spoken from notes. It was impossible to record the question and answer periods faithfully on tape, so they have been omitted. There were, however, many such periods, and it is unfortunate to have lost their richness. The Table of Contents reflects the order of the sessions. Within each session presentations are placed in their order of appearance.

A final paper entitled Issues for Program Development was written by Dan Safran, the conference moderator, after the conference. In it he extracts salient and recurring themes. Safran draws on the full range of the discussions to explore issues raised and suggests some important programmatic directions to strengthen parent involvement in the education of early adolescents.

The careful reader will find many gems from the personal experiences of the local project directors and parents. The national program descriptions add an essential backdrop to this picture, while the researchers, educators and the small group discussions raised probing questions. A final panel with members from various education-related organizations speculated on the future of home-school alliances.

Many useful program ideas can be found on these pages. In our roles as research sponsors, we also seek to clarify questions whose answers would advance the practice of home-school collaboration.

Oliver Moles, Leader
Families as Educators Team, NIE

INTRODUCTIONS

Dan Safran, Conference Chair

I am very pleased to welcome you to the National Institute of Education's Conference on Home-School Alliances. Our focus, as you know, is "Approaches to Increasing Parent Involvement in Children's Learning in Upper Elementary and Junior High Schools (Grades 4-9)."

I want to take a few moments to say some things about the conference format and participants. First, and most important, we have attempted to model home-school alliances rather than just talk about them. As a result our conference will begin with local program reports featuring presentations by staff and parent representatives. This is a departure from the traditional educational conference modality which tends to exclude and objectify parents. Second, we have selected from a wide array of possibilities a highly diverse group of programs and people with differing experiences and perspectives in our multi-cultural society. Third, we have scheduled presentations reflecting the often divergent views of local and national programs, professionals and consumers, theoreticians and practitioners, researchers and policymakers. Fourth, we have attempted to provide a mixture of experiences for conferees combining presentations, panel discussions, and small group problem-solving.

Gladys Keith Hardy, Deputy Director, NIE

I am delighted to welcome you. Let me first welcome Dan Safran as Chair of this conference, and thank him for the kind of enthusiasm and excitement about the potential of this conference that I hope, and I am sure, will prevail these two days.

Few of you would deny that parents play a major role in educating their children. But the idea of strengthening and supporting parents' efforts by the home and school working together, especially among older children, has not received much attention. I am glad to see that you will be exploring this area and that parents as well as program administrators and developers, researchers and educators are here to work togehter.

As Dr. Safran said, there have been other conferences like this with the same group of people, but in the past the parents were left out.We are especially pleased that this combination is at play at this conference.

Let me tell you a little bit about the Institute. NIE was created by Congress in 1972 to be the primary Federal agency for educational research and development. The Institute's mission has two parts: to promote educational equity and to improve the quality of educational practice.

To accomplish this mission NIE supports research and dissemination activities that will help individuals regardless of race, sex, age, economic status, ethnic origin, or handicapping condition to realize their full potential through education.

The Institute's programs grow out of a variety of activities which are planned to stimulate the exchange of views among educators, policy makers, parents, and other citizens on nationally significant educational issues.

I am glad to see that this conference will provide such an exchange of views. Local project directors and parents have much to tell each other about how home-school alliances develop, operate and achieve success. The assessment of these and the national programs to be presented should be of great use, not only to other planners developing similar programs but also to Federal agencies in Washington which need to consider how to stimulate good programs. In that regard, I am very pleased to welcome here leaders from such programs in other parts of the Department of Education, other Federal agencies and non-governmental education associations which are interested in furthering coordination between home and school to improve student learning.

The Department of Education is greatly concerned with strengthening the role of parents in education and schooling. Secretary Hufstedler has stated on many occasions that increasing parent involvement will be a major goal of this Department. As one indication of this commitment Deputy Undersecretary Michael Bakalis meets regularly with representatives of parents and citizen groups to hear their views and concerns. He will be sharing some of his thoughts at this conference on the constraints and opportunities to develop home-school alliances.

When NIE was reorganized three years ago into three major programs - Teaching and Learning, Educational Policy and Organization, and Dissemination in the Improvement of Practice - we recognized the role of parents and family members in the educational process and we created two subunits, the Family and Community Studies and Families as Educators team, whose work is described for you below. The programs to be

presented today will also relate to other research and dissemination efforts supported by NIE research on bilingual education, competency testing, teaching and instructional processes in schools, etc.

I am pleased to note how the organization of this conference speaks to aspects of NIE's missions. By your focus on children who are failing or not achieving well in school you will be dealing with those most in need of a better education. Your own ethnic and racial heritages as well as your work suggests that your experiences are close to the problems of groups which have received inequitable treatment. I hope your dialogue will test the applicability of programs and strategies to assist different groups.

Since improving the practice of education through research and dissemination is the second part of our mission. I am pleased to see that you will be hearing directly from local programs including the views of parents on the unique kinds of home-school alliances in the five localities represented here. If we are to learn how such alliances can improve the practice of education in schools and other settings, it is essential to hear from the people who operate and are served by such programs, including parents in leadership roles.

You are exploring programs aimed at an age group students which in a sense is much more difficult to serve than younger children. Those in upper elementary and junior high schools are becoming more independent of parents, and the approval of peers begins to compete with parental approval. If these students have not mastered the basic skills already they may be more reluctant to step forward for special attention. Yet, many lack functional literacy skills at these ages. Parents and schools often seem not to have well developed plans and programs for working together to help such children in early adolescense.

Here is the challenge : If this conference is able to identify new and important and practical ways for schools to support and strengthen parents' own efforts with their children, it will have made a significant contribution to improving the practice of education.

I wish you all success in this conference and in your work in your communities.

Oliver Moles, Leader, Families as Educators Team, NIE

The Families as Educators team focuses on the teaching and learning process and how that affects children of school ages. I will give you an overview of our interests and the kinds of research we support.

We are interested in the social processes within families by which children learn and acquire skills that may be useful to them in school and out of school. We are also interested in the community influences on family educational processes including the effects of employment and unemployment. This is certainly very important and we share sponsorship of a National Academy of Sciences panel that is looking at the effects of work and community institutions on families and children's development. Our third area of concern, home-school relationships, is the reason for this conference.

I hope you will take special note of our conception of the characteristics of Home-School Alliances in the Introduction because it indicates that we are interested in the kinds of relations that can be built between home and school around children's learning and not some of the other kinds of things that are often included in thinking of parent involvement, such as parents serving on advisory committees, or parents working in the schools. Instead, we are interested in understanding the things that parents may do out of school by way of tutoring, by way of motivating, by way of supporting children in homework, and a variety of other things that may be done in the home by families as educators. It may be that for older children the family's main contribution is in other areas than direct tutoring, although this is an important area that will be discussed quite a bit today. We are interested in what kinds of roles parents can play as children get older. That is very much the focus of this conference.

Urie Bronfenbrenner has said that parents demonstrate a kind of irrational caring and support for their children which is a very different role than the teacher's relationship to children. In the classroom children must master certain subject matter, but the parent's attachment goes beyond judging children's performance. And studies do indicate that parents are indeed very much concerned with their children's welfare, with children doing well in school, with their future. There is indeed a good opportunity for building alliances based on the complementary capabilities of parents and schools.

There are certain realistic limitations on alliance building that I hope you will be dealing with both on the school side and on the parents side as we get into this conference. But I think there is a great deal of interest in alliances generated not only by your presence and the programs and activities you represent, but also by other groups around the country. For example, I attended a meeting just last week toward forming a National Coalition on Parent Involvement in Education which was concerned with the whole range of kinds of parent involvement for all school age children. Title I activities now deal with older children as well as younger ones. We will also be hearing about other programs bearing on home-school alliances from various agency representatives in the new Department of Education.

We want then to glean two things from this conference. You will see a set of guiding questions attached to your conference schedule which in a sense can be reduced to two kinds of interests that we have. First, and most important, is to capture the ideas from the local programs to be presented and from the national organizations also represented here so as to gain some guidance for others who want to develop similar programs or want to strengthen ones that are already underway. Second, we are interested in the unanswered questions. As a research and development agency we need to identify the kinds of issues that remain to be explored, the kinds of questions where research is still needed.

But essentially we want to learn from all these programs and make this information available to others -- the kinds of exciting and promising approaches to home-school alliances only you can describe, and the kinds of things in this area that might be done.

Berlin Kelly, Acting Leader, Family and Community Studies Team, NIE

As Gladys Hardy mentioned, there are two units within NIE which concern themselves with issues of family, school, community, and the workplace. I am acting as the team leader for Family and Community Studies which is housed organizationally within the Educational Organizations and Local Communities Unit of which I am Assistant Director. We are in turn housed in a larger unit called Educational Policy and Organization.

For us, a central question is: "What institutions and organizations are there in the community which are presumably changing family styles and family organization?"

I will mention briefly several of our major projects. We have a new and interesting project whose principal investigator asks about the paradox of the high educational aspirations and the lower achievement of minority children. We also have a small project with Enterprises for New Direction, a local firm, in which we are looking specifically at social services to minority families, how these services are coordinated, and whether services in the community are increasingly of an informal mode. We want to know what kind of informal services are available for families and how these services are being provided.

Finally, the National Academy of Sciences is studying for NIE the impact of womens' and mens' labor force participation on the growth and education of children. They are reviewing the research evidence on links among the workplace, community organizations, schools and families as they affect the education and development of the child.

These projects are just now beginning to produce a set of papers for us, and this activity is geared, in part, to helping the Family and Community Studies team in the Institute focus on a long-term research agenda.

FIVE LOCAL PROGRAMS

Dan Safran, Conference Chair

The five programs from whom we are about to hear are examples of efforts to build and sustain home-school alliances in upper elementary and junior high schools. Each program operates in a different way and serves a unique urban community.

Peralta Year Round School is a public alternative elementary school in Oakland, California serving a highly integrated community with a wide array of family lifestyles. Its program involves a wide range of parent initiated activities at the school site level and attempts at coordination with and improvement of the local junior high school.

The Home Curriculum Program is a school district sponsored effort in Detroit, Michigan, serving a predominantly black population. Its emphasis is on reading improvement reaching parents through direct intervention and the media.

The Parents Can Be Tutors Program is based at Florida International University in Miami, Florida, and serves children whose parents have limited English speaking ability. Its activities emphasize parent education in overcoming problems of acculturation and language acquisition.

The Home-School Basic Skills Program is a school district sponsored effort in Arlington, Virginia, which assists Black children to meet state competency requirements. Its primary emphasis is the use of tutoring in home or community-based settings.

The Bilingual Training Institute for Parents is based at the Intercultural Development Research Association in San Antonio, Texas, and serves children in Spanish speaking or bilingual families in several school districts. Its efforts are directed at preparing parents for involvement in their children's schools.

Supplemental information on each program can be found in the Appendix. Salient features of the programs are summarized in Appendix A. Responses to questions on the programs posed after the conference are in Appendix B.

1. Peralta Year Round School Oakland, California

Karen Boyden, Parent

I am Karen Boyden, and I'm a parent of two children ages 12 and 7. I just have one child who graduated from Peralta Year-Round School in Oakland, and I have a second grader who is still there.

In 1971 Peralta Year-Round School in Oakland, California was in danger of being closed down because of low achievement scores and low enrollment. Although the surrounding neighborhood was fifty percent white and fifty percent Black, most of the white parents in the area were sending their children to private schools or other schools in Oakland and Berkeley. Peralta School at that time was 90 percent Black. Rumor had it that Peralta children, after the school was closed, would be sent to two larger schools nearby. A few active Peralta parents decided that it was very important that their neighborhood school be continued. In addition, the parents wanted to try to make some positive changes in the curriculum so that the students would learn more and the white parents in the neighborhood would again start sending their children there.

After much research, visits to other site school visits, and many, many lengthy meetings, the parent committee along with the principal of Peralta decided that an alternative program was needed to save the school from closure. What was developed was an innovative year-round program, with multi-graded classes and an emphasis on individualized instruction.

Financial support was obtained from Oakland's Master Plan Citizens Committee, (a district-wide program initiated by the then new Superintendent of Schools, Marcus A. Foster, whose goal was to broaden and to nurture more effective school community involvement).

The Peralta site planning committee worked on a proposal which was submitted to the Board of Education in March of 1973. The proposal was approved and on July 9, 1973, the Peralta Year-Round School began as a five-year pilot program. This July (1980) marked the eighth year of the year-round program. The program has been a success.

Achievement test scores over the years have steadily improved. On the average our students are gaining 1.5 years of progress for every year in school.

Because it has been designated as an alternative school, and we are able to draw students from all over the city of Oakland, the school has achieved a racial balance which is reflective of the student population of the city of Oakland.

The total enrollment at the school has risen from 270 students in 1971 to 370 students today. There is a waiting list for the school, particularly in the primary grades. Student fighting and valdalism have decreased considerably over the years.

In summary, Peralta School exists today because of the commitment of parents to create a school to meet the needs of its own community. It is a multi-ethnic, multi-cultural school where children are learning the academic skills and social skills which I feel provide a good basic foundation for their further education as well as for their role as active, useful citizens.

Cynthia will give an overview of parental involvement in the instructional program at the school.

Cynthia Harris, Acting Principal

Good morning, my name is Cynthia Harris and I am now the Acting Principal of Peralta Year-Round School. I came on staff seven years ago, as the year-round program was getting underway. I became interested in Peralta because it was an innovative school, a year-round school, and a school that exhibited high degrees of parent involvement.

I will talk to you now just a little about our instructional program and how parents are actively involved in the process.

At Peralta we have multi-age groupings within the classrooms. The schedule of the year-round school has children attend class for 9 weeks and go on vacation for 3 weeks. At any one time there are three groups of grades K-1-2 classes, 2-3-4 classes, 4-5-6 classes. Because we have these kinds of groupings it necessitates a great deal of individualization, so our teachers are individualizing their math programs, their reading programs, their multi-cultural education programs, psycho-motor programs, language arts programs and all of the other disciplines. In most of the classrooms there are activity centers with a variety of activities taking place at different times. Parents are actively involved in creating programs as well as working along with the teacher in implementing and executing learning activities.

There is also an emphasis on involving the children in self directed learning activities, since a part of our school philosophy is to develop self-directed students.

Most of the activities are not just directed by text book oriented kinds of approaches or whole class lesson approaches, but rather on personalized approaches for students and for the parents.

Part of our instructional program, or a great deal of it, is aimed at improving student achievement and the reading and math disciplines. In our district, we have district-mandated learning and reading expectations. Teachers

must teach to all of these areas identified by the District as key learning expectations. Parents come in and assist in making games and working with the teachers. Yet, parents also have these expectations in their homes to support the teacher in assisting the child in learning specific skills. There is a thorough knowledge of the kinds of skills that are being taught at home and the kinds of skills that are being taught at school.

Parents are actively enrolled in establishing priorities for the school instruction in two other ways. We are an ESEA Title I School, and we are participants in California's School Improvement Program. Parents and staff have to write a school plan which is the district piece of our school plan. Before we can sign off on our State application forms, parents have to approve. This means that they have to be aware of our budget, the kinds of programs we are implementing and the kind of people we are hiring. To know about all these kinds of things requires parents to play a very active role. If we are doing some things they are not in agreement with, parents can refuse to sign off. So it is very important that parents be involved in planning our instructional program, its implementation and monitoring.

Because our year round school has four groups each following a different yearly schedule, communication is very important, and our teachers are working very hard along with the parents. I really like the term that we are using at this conference, "Home-School Alliance," because it means we are kind of linking up there. Parents and teachers are heavily involved in conferences. There is one conference every quarter. There are always a lot of phone calls, notes, bulletins, parent newsletters, and lots of informal ties.

Karen will now speak to parent participation on another level - the school level.

Karen Boyden, Parent

First, I want to add a little about classroom level participation. Peralta parents are more than encouraged to participate in the classroom. They do individual and small group tutoring, thev provide many classes, they go on numerous field trips, they help the teachers pack and unpack every nine weeks. They plan and implement fund-raising activities for special classroom trips or special equipment. For example, two of our classes house computers that are used as learning and teaching aids, and those computers have been purchased by parents in the classroom organizing various kinds of fund raisers.

In addition to volunteering their time, some Peralta parents are paid to work there. Currently, we have four instructional assistants and two teachers who are also Peralta parents.

The Peralta Parent Group, which is a non-profit corporation is the vehicle through which parents can participate on the school-wide level. The traditional fund-raisers, such as carnivals, walkathons, raffles, have supported classroom activities, sent staff representatives to pertinent workshops and conferences and have given much needed financial support to our intersession program which is not funded by the district.

The fund-raisers, funded by the parent group also serve as community social events and the mechanism through which parents and staff and community people can get together and have a good time.

Parents on the curriculum committee have been involved on a yearly basis in the selection of text books for the students. This year Peralta is participating in the Reading is Fundamental Program - the RIF Program.

Because vandalism has decreased considerably over the last few years, the school was given some monies by the district as an incentive. With the addition of a parent group donation the school will be able to purchase three paperback books for every child in the school. Both parents and staff are working together on the selection and dispersing of these books.

Parents have been involved in problem-solving on the school-wide level. As an example, a year or so ago our intersession program was in severe danger of being eliminated because of cutbacks in educational funding. Parents formed an ad hoc committee and went to the Board of Education in a successful attempt to keep the intersession program intact as an integral part of our year-round program.

Through the Peralta Parent Group's teacher selection committee, parents have been involved for eight years in the recruiting, screening and the selection of teachers, as well as two principals.

Beginning in 1973, under the Marcus A. Foster Earthquake Safe Construction Program the Peralta School site was slated for demolition and replacement. A new "building" consisting of "relocatable" structures was built. The new site was dedicated in January of 1978. Peralta parents were involved throughout the process. A parent, staff and community committee screened and selected the architectural firm to design the facility. This committee met for a period of many months with the firm to help them work out a design for a school that would meet the needs of the Peralta program.

After the new school was built there was no money left over from the district to renovate the drab asphalt playground. The Peralta Parent Group applied for and received a $10,000.00 Community Development block grant for this purpose in 1977. In addition, through numerous fund-raisers, the parent group raised an additional $5,000.00 and with the aid of parent-donated tools, time and labor the playground now boasts two big toy wooden structures and a garden area. There is still much work to be done on the playground.

Cynthia will now discuss some specific upper grade activities that have involved parents at this time.

Cynthia Harris, Acting Principal

A unique parent education program was given by the teachers at Peralta. The course called PAIR, Parent Aid in Reading. What is especially interesting about this course is that it was developed by the teachers and used the different programs that they were actually employing in their classrooms. It was a program the teachers developed for parents. I thought that was really interesting.

I would also like to talk a little bit about a course we are offering now called Democratic Approaches to Effective Child Rearing. This class came out of a need expressed by parents at a parent dessert meeting, which is the meeting that our teachers have each quarter to discuss with parents what they are doing in their classrooms. It is also a time where parents can share with teachers what they would like to see happen in the classroom, what kinds of lessons or what kinds of units of study they would like to have.

This course was designed to deal with application of democratic principles in our present day philosophy of child-rearing and development, and in our future approaches based upon the social equality of youth. I think it is very exciting to be able to offer this class. There is a community college in our area of California called Vista College. If you present a mini-proposal to this college they will provide funds for an instructor. We presented a need that our parents had to learn more about child-rearing techniques. We obtained a professor from San Francisco State University. He meets with our parents on Tuesday evenings. The class has been going very well, and we hope to do it again next quarter.

The class deals with a variety of discussion topics. The parents decide on the areas on which they want to focus. Their needs were the challenging child, the family constellation, birth order, democratic approaches to life situations, modern techniques of child-rearing, effects of child abuse, sibling rivalry, resolving family conflicts, family life with parents, development and the use of the home library, special education, EMR classes,

IQ testing, education programs, individualized educational plans (required under the special education act), proficiency tests, diet, nutrition and exercise, and variety of other topics.

We have another class. This class is developed with staff and parents and covers multi-cultural education. The title of this class is "All About Us," and it deals with the multi-cultural experience designed to promote understanding and cooperation among ethnic, racial and religious groups in our school. This particular program was developed by a parent and a couple of staff persons. It is designed to assist students in some of the following areas: development of a positive self image; pride in one's own heritage; increased awareness of cultural groups; the ability to identify and avoid stereotypes; understanding and acceptance of cultural differences; the ability to resolve inter-personal and inter-group differences; building positive communication skills.

This program operates under the assumption that multi-cultural education is a process necessary to ensure that (1) all students are seen and valued as individuals, (2) education and learning is effective when individual interest and needs are addressed, and (3) the academic environment is enriched by the integration of culturally relevant non-biased curriculum material.

What is exciting about this program is that here is a class developed for parents where some of the same parents work with groups of students in the classroom. It is a class that works with parents and contributes to staff development. Parents work together with the staff on some of these multi-cultural concepts.

Lastly, I would like to talk a little bit about how we got involved in developing an on-going career education program through a parent dessert meeting.

At Peralta we feel that career education is necessary very early in the education program. An academic environment infused with career education as a required curriculum can provide current information on the economy as a guide to preparing for the future. It can also provide information to our students on job market needs. And, most importantly, the program provides for self

assuring exploration of student career interests. A class was developed for parents on understanding carrers where parents could come in and share their careers and also understand a little bit about how important this is on the elementary level.

I believe we were the first school in Oakland to implement a fourth through sixth grade full career program such as ours.

We culminated our career program last year with a Career Fair called "Our Day Will Come." This theme was given to us by our students. What was particularly exciting was that a parent coordinated the Career Fair and developed all the pieces that went into its planning and execution. I think that when parents do projects like this, the one thing that they need most is undergirding. I worked very hard to undergird the parent when she was discouraged or thinking she couldn't handle it. I just kind of stayed right there with her and she did a beautiful job. It was really exciting. We covered about nine different careers which we came up through assessing our students. We worked on art and design, office and legal education, journalism, transportation, scientific and technical, athletics, which was very popular, social, civil services, and health.

There was no money in our budget. Somehow at Peralta we make a way. Parents participated in fund raising: we solicited money throughout our community; the businesses participated; we had bake sales and other kinds of sales - and the community participated in this way.

Out of this program our parents came together and wrote a proposal to our State Department of Education to solicit more funds so that we can have a program like this on an on-going basis. Now we are waiting to see what is going to happen there.

Parents also participated in the affair itself, act as role models for the Career Fair. We feel strongly that the use of role models in career education exemplifies how career choices can certainly become a reality. This experience offers an understanding of options, and also broadens the students' awareness of the kinds of career options there are.

We selected as our theme, "Our Day Will Come" because we felt that this was a challenge from the Peralta parents to propose a method of improving interest in education and social justice. We are always talking about better citizens. We believe that it is important for the community to demonstrate a personal commitment for securing better programs for our boys and girls.

And now Karen will talk a little bit about our Claremont Junior High Parent Program.

Karen Boyden, Parent

Over the years, Peralta parents became increasingly concerned that the good education that their children were receiving at Peralta would end after they left the school and went on to the local junior high.

The local junior high was, at best, mediocre. It was racially imbalanced, the curriculum was lacking, there was general apathy among students, staff and parents.

Peralta parents started meeting with the principal of the junior high as well as with parents from the junior high and the other elementary schools that feed into that school. They met and decided to try to find ways to upgrade the curriculum, balance the school racially, and in general to make it a more appealing school. The group was able to make some substantial gains. For the first time federal funds were obtained for additional services to remedial students. In addition, some advanced classes in several subject areas were offered with special funding from the district.

The Peralta contingent was unsuccessful, however, in convincing the other members of the group that the local junior high should at least have one strand on a year-round schedule.

Cindy would like to continue to discuss Peralta's link to the local junior high.

Cynthia Harris, Acting Principal

I would like to talk a little bit about why I feel that vertical articulation is very important after you have done a lot of positive things at the elementary school level. Thinking about where the boys and girls are going to go next becomes very important.

A few years ago, we started to discuss the kinds of programs we could share with our junior high school. One program that was very viable, and in which the boys and girls experienced a lot of success, was the Lawrence Science Program. In this program, boys and girls who are interested in math went to the junior high three to four hours a week. This program culminated with a parent science fair, where parents from Peralta could meet with parents from the junior high and get a feel for what was going on at that school. At the end of the program they provided a field trip to Lawrence Berkeley Science Lab, which is a very important science place at home.

Also, three years ago I believe, Oakland's School Superintendent, Dr. Ruth Love, decided that a lot of schools were losing money when their students fail. I don't know if you are aware of it but in California, when you start to do really well, they start to cut back on your funds.

Dr. Love developed a program called Specialty Schools in which schools were rewarded for doing really well. For example, if boys and girls were scoring high or very well, she would label your school a specialty school. There were speciality schools in multi-cultural education, mathematics, reading, language arts, psycho-motor, all the disciplines.

Our school was labeled as a math specialty school and we were called the calculating center. From that we worked with the local junior high school on some of their math programs. They were very strong in computer math and this enabled some of our sixth grade students who were strong in mathematics to go to the junior high school to work on their computer program.

We also worked with the program called the Kids Handicapped Program, where the boys and girls learned how to deal with people who had different kinds of

handicaps or with people who were different. This was also worked out with our junior high where teachers would come into the classroom and teach units or lessons around issues relating to the handicapped.

We also have a peer teaching and peer tutoring program where Peralta and junior high teachers share strategies on how to improve tutoring and how to employ peer teaching. A lot of sharing is starting to happen among the teachers.

Lastly, I would like to talk about the musical program at the junior high which is one of their strong points. Last year, there were three music exchanges. At Peralta the upper grade chorale presented "Step into the Sunshine" for the junior high students. Students from the junior high came into the elementary school to perform instrumental music programs. These kinds of sharing sessions or exchanges helped the boys and girls feel good about the junior high school. Many students had indicated that they had no interest in going there because their parents had thought of other kinds of schools. Now they are taking another look, and I think this is a very positive thing. The junior high teachers and staff come to Peralta for sharing sessions with parents to talk about the kinds of programs to have and the kinds of changes to be made.

2. Home Curriculum Program, Detroit, Michigan

Virginia High, Project Supervisor

The Home Curriculum Program is designed to increase involvement of the parents of selected middle school students in the educational process of their children. The targeted students generally have some academic or adjustment problems and require assistance above that normally provided by the school staff. The assumption of the program is that motivated and involved parents can provide much of this educational assistance.

This component, which is funded by the Emergency School Aid Act (ESAA), began in 1977 and deliberately selected the middle school as a focus because of the traditional problems inherent in maintaining parent involvement at this level. Most elementary schools succeed at motivating the parents of very young children to support the schools. As the children mature, the natural tendency is for parents to become less involved with the schools particularly when their children experience school-related difficulties.

The Home Curriculum staff works with parents toward getting better parental participation in their child's learning process and becoming more aware of their child's development through better communication with the child and the school.

While the primary curriculum focus of the project is reading and much of the work is targeted in this area, in a real sense the project is multi-disciplined. The goal is greater parental involvement, and if this can be accomplished through parent's interest in other areas, all means are used.

I am the central supervisor of the Home Curriculum Program. Each region has either one or two Home Curriculum Specialist Teachers who have the responsibility for the regional parenting activities and for supervising the

program in the middle schools. The day-to-day school activities are conducted by a paraprofessional, Home Curriculum Assistant, assigned to each school.

The Home Curriculum team has developed a community network of key community members for each school which can relay information within each school community concerning activities and neighborhood services available to parents.

A unique feature of the Home Curriculum Program is its reliance on home visitations when parents either cannot or will not come to the school. The Home Curriculum Team, through prior appointments, schedule meetings with parents in their homes to assist them in the use of home learning facilities and to bring about increased child-parent participation in acquiring academic skills. The Home Curriculum Team during a visitation will teach the parent a skill based on the child's need using materials that may be left with a parent to be used by the child.

Another means of involving parents is through Home Curriculum Parent Workshops. The major focus of this aspect of the project is a workshop designed by the staff entitled DEPTH or Detroit Effective Parenting Thrusts. The purpose of this workshop is to familiarize parents with techniques in parent-child communication skills.

The workshops introduce parents to multi-level communications techniques which can be used with their children. The workshops are supplemented by training sessions in whatever topics the parents request. The key concept is that the parents should have primary input into determining their own needs.

The workshops are conducted by the Home Curriculum Team in local schools,

churches and in other community facilities. Special parent guides and manuals have been written by the Home Curriculum Staff and are used in workshops for parents.

One major factor in the success of the city-wide reading program has been the active support of the media. In addition to keeping the community informed of the program's progress, the Detroit News helps to involve parents by printing weekly homework lessons, prepared by the Home Curriculum Team. Media support for the program also included broadcasting weekly Home Curriculum, Parents As Teachers programs over the radio.

Since 1977, thousands of parents have been served through this program. Now I would like to tell you how we work with parents.

We are in 63 middle schools in Detroit. We have 12 teacher specialists working with us and 63 para-professionals. We call them curriculum assistants.

Throughout the year we have in-service training for the teachers and the assistants. We have an identified target population. In each one of these middle schools children are chosen by the principal and the teachers. We also get recommendations from the guidance department and the attendance department. That is how we make up our list of special target children with whom we work.

The home curriculum assistant in each middle school serves as a liaison under the supervision of the teacher and the teacher specialists, and works very closely with the child in the building, but more so with the parent at home.

One of the unique features of this program is that when parents cannot come to us we go to them. Whenever they are available we will work with them--sometimes on a Saturday morning, sometimes Sunday morning workshops in a church. We have discovered great value in working with churches and the ministers.

When we started with this program, we decided to go to the parents, because parents traditionally do not just come pouring into a school building. We discovered that parents were afraid to go in schools, and some had not been inside a school building since they were children attending school. We believe that the home visitation component is vital to the success of the program. The visits provide an opportunity for Home Curriculum staff and parents to share information relating to many areas of student achievement.

The home visits with parents consisted of:

- o disseminating information about the Home Curriculum Program
- o discussing ways of assisting children in reading and/or math
- o delivering reading and math materials that parents can use with their children at home
- o sharing information about workshops and other home curriculum parent activities
- o sharing information about the Home Curriculum Radio Program Parents as Teachers which is a series of programs to assist parents in their children's learning process
- o delivering Home Curriculum "Tips to Parents" calendars
- o interpreting objectives of Detroit's standardized tests
- o sharing information about High School Proficiency Program with parents
- o addressing concerns of parents relating to the academic achievement of their children

Visiting parents in their homes does a great deal in terms of developing positive parent-staff interpersonal relations. In some cases, the parents who are visited have little or not direct contact with the school prior to the home visit; however, many parents became more willing to visit the school for workshops and other activities as a result of the home visits.

The Home Curriculum staff has also written and developed a Parent Guide for the Detroit Objective Referenced Test. This guide defines the reading skills and includes examples of each skill. Parents are urged and assisted to develop supporting activities in the home.

We believe that all parents want their children to succeed, and when parents are approached by someone who is honest and sincere, they will respond. We should listen to parents. They have concerns and insights that can greatly enhance a parent involvement program.

Delores Modock, Parent

My name is Delores. I have four children ages 14, 12, 11, and 9. I'm going to talk about what the home curriculum program means to me and other parents in Region VII of the Detroit Public Schools.

Some time ago, Mrs. Alexander, the home curriculum specialist, came to our parent club meeting at Robinson School and told us about a workshop she was planning region wide. I attended that workshop. This is my first involvement in the home curriculum program.

Each one of us received a large notebook containing all kinds of information on how we could set up a home learning center, and how we could help our children. We were told to make everything a learning experience and to share in it. They showed us how we could use practical things around the house to help our children, such as the TV Guide, cook books, the Bible, magazines, maps, the telephone directory and many more.

The home curriculum notebook contains material such as synonyms, antonyms, consonant blends, vowels, reading comprehension exercises. During the workshop, we made games that would help children in math. There were comic strips, crossword puzzles, word searches, and checker boards.

We were told that a home library is a must. We should encourage our children to read. It doesn't matter what they read, whatever they are interested in. We should sit down and read with them. We should let them see us reading and let them read to us.

They told us how we could use the television as a learning tool. After the children have watched a movie, ask them questions about it.

There are lots of skills in newspaper, reading, spelling, and math. We could teach our children budgeting and comparative buying. We could let them write out grocery lists and help with the buying. We were encouraged to take them to the grocery store with us. At home they can put the groceries away and arrange them in the pantry. These are just practical life skills.

We received a monthly calendar which had suggestions of things to do with the family each day. One suggestion was to tell your children "I love you" today.

I attended another workshop called the Detroit Effective Parenting Thrust. In this workshop we learned how to cope with our children and their problems. We were given examples of problems that would come up, and the solutions. We discuss the problems. We discuss problems we were having and found that our problems were similar to each others.

I found out that a lot of the fears we have and some of the situations we're involved in stem from our upbringing. It's very important that we raise our children in the proper way. We were taught not to belittle our children, not to use name calling. We should praise them. Sometimes children want our attention, and they will do wrong things to get our attention. We learn that you have to try to figure out what's really happening. Is this a power struggle, an attention getter, or what?

We learned that there is a difference between being a good parent and a responsible parent. We should encourage our children to make decisions, to believe in them and to respect them, to give them choices and responsibilities, to avoid making the child feel guilty, to set standards for them and expect them to contribute.

We learned that its important to hug and kiss our children and to say I love you, to let them express themselves, and to listen to them.

I attended another workshop called the Emerging Adolescent. In this workshop we learned to understand the physical and the emotional changes in our ten to fourteen year old children. There were field trips for the parents and for the children.

I really got a lot from these workshops. They really helped me. I feel that I'm doing my part. I'm providing love, understanding, and helping my children. I expect them to succeed. And, if they don't it won't be my fault.

The Home Curriculum Specialist came to my home many times. They were really a big help to me. They would also bring out extra material to help my daughter who was having problems in reading.

I want to end by sharing with you some comments of other parents in the program.

> "My children were going through changes that I didn't understand. Being a new parent, I just didn't know how to handle the problems that came up. By listening to the other mothers and the home curriculum specialist, I was helped. You learn that people have similar problems. By attending these workshops, I learned how to cope. You see that you are doing things wrong. We valued the leader's opinion."
>
> "The workshop was very informative. It made me aware of what was happening to my children. It gave me guidelines and suggestions on how to cope with problems. It let me know "It's normal" and made things more easy going. It gave my children something to do. We learned that we don't have to buy expensive books. It helped me to expect certain behavior. We learned that this is growth and development."

3. Parents Can Be Tutors Program, Miami, Florida

Arturo Rio, Project Director

In May, we finished the first year of the Parents Can Be Tutors Program. We have been working with parents of limited English ability, providing them with materials and methods to teach their children at home.

The program was conceived after the first implementation of the State Assessment Testing Program in Florida. We found that approximately half of the Blacks and 1/3 of the Hispanics in the third, fifth, eighth and eleventh grades failed to pass the Basic Skills test at the beginning of the year. When the statistics became available a group of faculty members at Florida International University conducted an investigation.

One of the things we found as a result of the investigation was that parents felt that they really had no opportunity to get involved. They did not know what was going on in the school. They wanted to get involved in the school system of Dade County, Florida, and to learn how they, themselves, could help at home even though they did not know English. This is how the program was conceived.

First of all, our primary aim was to do something about the retention rate at the different grade levels. We decided to zero in on third, fifth, and eighth graders. Our primary responsibility was to work with parents in Spanish. The first thing that we did was to develop materials, because there were no materials in the basic skills in Spanish that corresponded to the Florida program.

We had to begin by adapting and translating materials. What we developed were bilingual materials in the three basic skill areas for the three grades, and a parenting manual. As you will see in our reading program, for example, on the left are the objectives and the exercises in Spanish; on the right they are are presented in English. The parent and child can sit together and work on specific objectives in each skill area. Oftentimes, we see the parent work on the left side and the child work on the right side of the book. What often

happens is that the parent will learn some English and the child will learn some reading skills in Spanish. But this is not our primary goal for the program. The primary goal of the program is to see that our kids are not retained due to lack of mastery of basic skills.

In the year that we worked with the parents and the teachers we wanted to see to it that by May (when the students are retested) they would pass. Because if they did not master these skills by the end of the year (those that failed in the beginning), they would be retained by law.

Our main goal was to make sure that the kids in our program passed to the next grade. And thus far, our statistics have been very encouraging. Approximately 97 percent of the kids in the Parents Can Be Tutors Program were promoted.

I would like to talk about how the program "feels" and how we "run" things. First of all, we needed staffing procedures upon receipt of the grant award from Title VII, Office of Bilingual Education and Minority Language Affairs. Our first task was to begin recruiting. The type of professionals that you recruit to parent training programs is extremely important. I was very pleased to hear of what they are doing in Detroit, because, in a lot of ways, what is being done in Detroit is similar to what we are doing outside of the basic skills or in what we call area parenting and general parenting development. I am glad to hear that some of our ideas are shared in other large communities. We agree with your approaches to reaching the parents. The staff that you have in any kind of parental involvement program is important. In a program directed at minority people, you need to have special consideration. If you want to bring out the parent that normally or historically has not gotten involved, you need to work extra hard at it. And you need to have people who are more committed than just "wanting a job."

You will find that the material that is available, as the staff in Detroit found out, will have to be adapted or new material has to be developed. You cannot use the old traditional techniques of recruiting and working with parents, when you are dealing with parents who are not middle class, who have language deficiencies, and who have reading problems themselves. Sometimes you have to start at a very low level and with techniques that do not appear in the literature. You have to develop your own techniques, hit and miss, and then determine what works.

We are at the stage now with a new program to be started in the next ten days where we will be working with the parents of newly-arrived refugee children. I'm sure that everybody here is aware of what we have been faced with in Miami since April 26. One hundred seventeen thousand refugees from Cuba arrived in Key West. These families are going to need quite a bit of help to get oriented into the community before they can help their children. We are going to be working with them in the area of basic survival in a new environment by teaching them basic English and helpful information about the community and its services.

We have six areas where we are going to be working with them based on their needs, and then we will get into parenting. First we have to address employment. The unemployment rate is about 65 percent for this population. There are also the problems of relocation, health, community services, etc. But, we have to keep in mind, too, that this new population of Cubans is very different from the population we worked with last year. We are going to have to work especially hard with them, and we are going to have to do it totally in Spanish. We are now primarily learning about this population. That is something we really have to do before we try to get them involved. We really have to know them. We can't expect someone to come from the outside and take over.

The first thing we did was to have the Florida International University sponsor a Cuban refugee crisis conference. We brought in people from all over the community. We also brought people from Key West and from Immigration and Naturalization Service to discuss refugee problems and needs. 44

I brought with me one of our parents from a school in the southwest area of Miami. Her name is Zenaida Moreno. She has five grandchildren. She is not only a parent; She is a grandparent. Her daughters both work. Her son-in-law has two jobs. She opted to represent the family in the tutoring aspect. She is not employed, so she has the time. She is very dedicated to her family.

When we were going through the process of selecting a parent, the first thing my staff said was "Bring a parent who speaks English. That way, the parent can address the group." I objected, since our program was not designed to serve parents who speak English. The parents who can speak English can go anywhere; they can participate in other programs and can get into normal PTA activities on their own. So, it was recommended that her case was a special and interesting one since she was a grandmother at every school function, every parent training session, and was very eager to get involved. We invited her and she immediately accepted.

She would like to relate briefly in Spanish some of her experiences in the program. Maria Elena Betancourt will translate for her into English.

Zenaida Moreno, Grandparent

My name is Zenaida Moreno and I represent the program, "Parents Can Be Tutors."

I participated last year to learn how to assist my grandaughter who was in the fifth grade - how to assist her with her school work. I think the program was excellent. By participating in the program I learned to utilize valuable materials to assist my child in math, reading and writing. We also learn how to be effective parents, or as in my case grandparents.

In these meetings we learn the importance of parental involvement. I believe it is very important to have this type of program for Hispanic parents, because of the benefits to us. We are instructed in a language that we know. We are therefore able to learn and understand what is happening, especially since it is difficult for us to learn the second language. If it was not taught in our language we would not know what was happening.

We need to learn and to be motivated to participate and to assist our children. In my case, I am participating because my daughter and her husband work in the evening. I went to the meeting as a representative of our family in order to learn how to assist, or how to help, our children.

Situations like mine are very common in my community, since it's usually the grandmother who is at home, and therefore can devote more time to the children. For this reason it is important, not only that we support this type of program but that we try to get more programs like this for the benefit of the children. Thank you.

Dan Safran

Before we take questions I want to make the point that we just had a demonstration of how possible it is to have discussion, as we sometimes try to do in schools, when there is more than one language present. No one suffered any pain by having a simultaneous or interspersed translation. I want to thank both Arturo Rio and Mrs. Moreno for being here and for being comfortable dealing with two languages. I come from a state where Spanish was the primary language 140 years ago and sometimes we have people who forget that there are many languages spoken in the United States.

4. Home-School Basic Skills Program. Arlington, Virginia

Betty Ann Armstrong, Project Director

I'm going to give you a brief overview of the program's background since its inception in 1979, some of our concerns about the program, and what we are trying to do to improve it. I will save the rest of my time for Alberta Carpenter and Audrey Shivers so that questions may be directed to our Parent Assistant and consumer.

The Home-School Basic Skills Improvement Program began in Arlington in January 1979 as an attempt to improve the reading and math achievement scores for minority students-especially our Black population. The results of state-mandated competency tests administered to all ninth graders in February 1978 indicated that the percentage of failing students who were Black was substantially greater than statistics on the total population would lead one to expect. I must add that Arlington began testing for competency at the ninth grade level in an effort to obtain early needs identification and to provide remediation for students showing deficiencies.

Of the Blacks who were tested as ninth graders, 55.3 percent failed the reading competency test in the ninth grade and 62.4 percent failed the computation test as compared to 19 percent and 21.9 percent of whites on these two tests. In addition, analysis by ethnic category of those students reading two or more years below grade level revealed that, of the students tested in grades four, six, eight, and eleven, the number of Asian and Black students reading two or more years below grade level was substantially higher than the distribution of these groups would lead one to expect.

Extensive efforts have been made in the form of special programs, personnel, materials, staff development, Title I programs, summer school programs, and volunteer programs. These have been directed by the school, located in the school, scheduled during the school day and supported by school resources.

The Home-School Basic Skills Improvement Program was proposed as a means of enhancing current school-based efforts by enlisting more fully the commitment and energy of parents and other members of the community. Its basic thrust is to

provide a program of home/community tutoring to assist those students deficient in the basic skills of reading and mathematics.

In 1979, students in grades 4 through 10 were served. In 1979-80, we moved to include grade 11, and in 1980-81, students served are in grades 4 through 12.

The criteria for students served was set at those who scored significantly below grade level on one or more of the county's regularly administered tests, and those failing to meet minimum requirements for graduation in reading and mathematics.

To assist parents and community groups to provide tutoring services, a Basic Skills Community Coordinator and Parent Assistants were employed. The Basic Skill Community Coordinator serves as liaison between the schools and community groups providing volunteer tutoring services.

She assists community groups to design and conduct tutoring programs in basic skills areas, organizes training sessions for tutors, and supplies appropriate instructional materials.

Nine Parent Assistants were hired to serve as liaison between the school and the parents who are helping their children at home in basic skills. The Parent Assistant knows the specific skill deficiencies of the students she or he is serving. They are able to relate these deficiencies to parents and help them to lay out plans for corrective action that would involve parents as teachers or, at least, as monitors. They provide parents with materials that help them discharge this plan and, in the absence of parent tutoring, secure tutoring services from tutoring groups or independent tutors on a volunteer basis. Parent Assistants also participate in training provided by the central office staff.

During the 1979-80 school year, aside from serving 414 students, making 577 home visits, referring 123 students for tutoring, with 85 placed,

Parent Assistants conducted parent meetings with total parent attendance reaching 187. They helped to develop and distribute a newsletter for parents and also maintained bi-weekly phone contact with parents. Home visits were scheduled about once a month. In addition, they set up peer tutoring programs with students in schools.

Initially funded through CETA, the program now operates with an appropriation of county funds which supports the Home School Basic Skills Community Coordinator and eight Parent Assistants. On July 22, 1980, the program came under my direction, as Curriculum Specialist for Reading/English/Language Arts, in an effort to coordinate to a greater extent programs for low achieving students.

After analyzing the program and its operation, it seemed that several areas needed attention and some manner of resolution.

1. The securing of tutoring services on a volunteer basis was becoming increasingly difficult. Currently, a program of training and paying tutors is underway in Arlington so that this tutoring service can be linked to the Home-School Basic Skills Improvement Program. One of our Parent Assistants was just hired to coordinate and direct this tutoring service.

2. The spreading of eight or nine Parent Assistants among 23 elementary schools, 4 intermediate schools, and 3 high schools with a caseload on the average of 50 students seemed to be too much and too broad.

This year, we have limited the Home-School Program to six elementary schools that are participating in a special project called the Potential Achievers Project, designed to focus on instruction within the school day for lower achieving students. In addition, Parent Assistants are serving intermediate and high school students.

We limited the caseload of our Parent Assistants to no more than 35 at any one time; this is still quite a load.

We felt that at the same time we were trying to engage parental support and involvement, we needed to take a look at what was going on in the classrooms.

Accordingly, we are trying to tie the Home-School Basic Skills Program with our elementary school level staff development and instructional program.

3. Communication with principals and school staff regarding the program needed to be increased and more structure added to program operation.

In order for a program operating out of a school to move and to have some effect, principals and staff need to know what is going on, why it is going on, and on what structure the program is based .

We developed more specific criteria for identification of students and sent this out to participating schools. We made greater contact with principals and school staff and saw to it that no Parent Assistant carried more than two schools, with some of them carrying only one school, especially at the high school level.

An introductory letter was sent to principals regarding the program, changes being made in the program, and the assignment of Parent Assistants.

We are currently operating on the basis that any applicant for a Parent Assistant position will be sent to the principal for an interview once they have been interviewed at the central office.

A sample letter was developed and distributed to all principals to help them communicate with parents about the program.

4. More emphasis was needed on evaluation of the program. Last year principals were asked to respond to questions about the program's effectiveness. Nineteen out of twenty responded that the Parent Assistant assigned to the school had been effective. The questionnaire results indicated that feedback from the staff, students, and parents had been generally positive. I did not feel that this was enough evaluation, since it did not adequately look at what our consumers, the parents, thought of the program, We need a specific design developed

to gather information from parents regarding their feelings on the success or failure of the program. We did not have anything regarding Parent Assistants' reactions to the program, and any changes they felt needed to be made. I always think that students should be asked about a program. They are also consumers, yet we've had none of that.

We are now in the process of designing and developing an evaluation tool that we can use to gain further information from these groups.

5. A program of this sort needs to secure and maintain qualified personnel. In many cases, applicants are young people who are in college; who are looking; who are on the move. You find good ones; you train them, and before long they are out of the program.

In order to assure some degree of continuity with students and parents, maintenance of qualified personnel is of the utmost importance. I believe that no program, no matter how beautifully designed, is any better than the people who are working in it.

5. Bilingual Training Institute for Parents, San Antonio, Texas

Maria Elena Betancourt, Project Director

I work with the Intercultural Development Research Association's Title VII Training Institute for Parents, which is a technical assistance, training and research organization. We are not based in any one school district. We are currently working with five school districts in the San Antonio area, specifically with bilingual parents. Our main focus is on issues dealing with language and culture.

I'd like to give you some background on how our program got started. For the past four or five years, we have been doing a lot of parental involvement training in various school districts in Texas. The training was not done with parents but was directed at teachers, principals, superintendents and other school personnel.

In the fall of 1978 we conducted a survey in 50 school districts in Texas to identify the types of activities, and the kinds of training that were taking place in each district. Based on our experiences with the districts we felt there was a lack of parent involvement, and very little training to support what involvement there was. The survey results validated our concern. As a result of this survey, we submitted a proposal for parent training to Title VII and got funded in 1979.

The general goal for the Institute is to build capacity in parents to analyze and develop strategies which will facilitate effective, meaningful involvement of greater numbers of parents in the development, implementation, and evaluation of programs responsive to the needs of limited English proficiency (LEP) students.

The three levels of parental involvement will serve as the Institute's major objectives. These are to provide training for parents in acquiring and/or developing various educational roles:

> as teachers of children by a sequence that provides information, skills development and skills application.
>
> as resources to teachers by a sequence that provides information, skills development and skills application.
>
> as parental decision makers by a sequence that provides information, skills development and skills application.
>
> as trainers of other parents by a sequence that provides information, skills development and skills application.

In keeping with the objectives of the Institute which are based on identified needs of districts for parent training, three levels or roles have been defined for parent training: (1) parent as teacher of children, (2) parent as resource to teacher (3) parent as decision maker. Training is provided in a series of workshops. For example, the first thing we do when invited to work in a school district is prepare a needs assessment. We have an orientation meeting for the parents and conduct the needs assessment in order to identify their training needs. If that particular group feels that they need assistance in the area of teaching their own children, we start our training with the first series of workshops: Parents as Teachers of Children.

Parents are the first teachers of children for learning does not occur exclusively in a school setting. The plan of the training institute is to strengthen the role of the parent as teacher and to allow parents to validate their "teaching" experiences and continue to learn other ideas that will enhance their child's growth and learning. Specific responsibilities in this role will be to (1) motivate the child to learn, by providing a variety of experiences, (2) learn to recognize when to use positive reinforcement (3) deal with discipline, (4) learn about ways that children develop.

It follows that parents have a wealth of information that can be shared with their children's teacher such as the child's culture, language background and community environment. The training is designed to tap this important commodity, therefore producing parents as educational models to (1) assist the teacher with group activities in the classroom (2) develop culturally relevant activities for utilization in the classroom (3) tutor students (4) recruit other parent volunteers and (5) serve as liaison between teacher and other parents/community.

The final element of the training model is the parent as a decision maker. The training activities will qualify parents to become effective leaders in all decision making aspects of education. Specifically the training will include (1) advocacy for Bilingual Education (2) sharing information on issues related to Bilingual Education (3) participation in program development, implementation and evaluation (4) active participation in parent advisory councils (5) participation in all aspects of decision making within the school system.

Each objective or training category can be treated individually. However they are sequentially complementary so that in order for parents to serve as resources to teachers they must have the skills for effective parenting. Likewise, decision making usually requires command of the first two objectives.

The training process consists of a three phase sequence that begins with information development, followed by skills development which in turn leads into skills application. This process, when applied to all three objectives or training categories provides an overview of the scope and sequence of the TIP design.

One of the things th we have worked on since the project started is to help parents become strong advocates for their children. We encourage parents to get involved in various school activities and with issues concerning their

children's needs. As a result of their involvement, parents have organized the Parent Association for Bilingual Education. Some of the parents made presentations to the San Antonio Area Association for Bilingual Education annual conference which is a teacher's organization. One-fourth of the participants at the conference were parents.

We train the parents to focus on processes and procedures to achieve their goal. Sometimes content is not as important as process. An example of this is the planning of a cultural activity, called a Jamaica Bilingue. We work with five school districts and once a month we have a general meeting, an affair or an activity where we bring all the school districts together. We wanted to give the parents the opportunity to start getting together, to share and to come up with an activity that they could themselves organize and plan. They decided on the Jamaica Bilingue. It was well attended, but not at the level the parents really wanted. They didn't have a thousand people there; they had maybe about two-hundred people altogether. I stressed to the parents that it wasn't so important that we had "only" two hundred participants. What was important was the fact that they themselves had gone through learning which was the one objective of the activity. The other objective of the Jamaica Bilingue was to share information on bilingual education, distribute material, share ideas, and then have some fun. It was a multicultural activity. In our workshop we emphasize the fact that culture is not only the songs and dances and the music of a people.

The parents were very impressed when they learned about the different levels of culture that Dr. Jose Gonzales has written so much about. We explain to them that culture had a lot to do with values and morals, and such things as situations in family life.

Cristina Garcia has been participating in the Institute. She is with the Northside Independent School District. She has been participating since last year and we hope she will be participating again this year. Cristina will talk to you about some of the experiences that she has had as a parent, and some of the things she has observed in other parents as well.

Christina Garcia, Parent

My name is Cristina Garcia and I have four children, ages 2, 4, 7, and 9. I participated in this program and I believe that it is a working program. The first thing I participated in was self-concept activities development where we learned to express ourselves in front of the group. We learned self confidence and never felt ridiculed by any of the group members. We could either speak English or Spanish and everybody was paying attention.

From that experience I felt very secure in myself. I had been going to community college for the last seven years, and this year I decided, instead of taking one class, to take three. So, I guess in that way, it helped me a lot.

Another good thing we learned from this was the value of language. Many of us speak only Spanish. So those people felt isolated, but after the training sessions, they felt very very good. For example, there is a mother there who is now working for the bilingual, bi-cultural parent involvement program in the Northside School District. She has expressed to all of us that this program is really working for her.

Another good thing in this program is the incentives that we have received For example, we receive money for babysitting; we receive money for mileage; we are furnished with meals for each conference and with materials. One of the most important things was that we receive three hour credit at UTSA, (University of Texas, San Antonio). For most of us that is very, very good.

I also attended the bilingual convention in our city and I was very lucky to be one of the presenters there. In my opinion, I think this program is working for all of the parents because we are more united. We feel like we are aware of what is going on in our schools. We can go in there any time and request any information that we feel we need. And many of us are

participating more, because of the training we received.

I wanted to show you this book that we, the mothers, made during our class. These are the materials that we used. They are in Spanish on one side and English on the other side.

The parents were provided with a notebook at the beginning of the training sessions, so that we could keep all of the materials we have been using. Some of the readings and hand-outs were very valuable in describing things that we could use.

Maria Elena Betancourt, Project Director

That particular booklet that we completed came about from an informal session. We had a two-hour meeting with the parents and were talking about ways in which parents could help children to read. We talked a lot about experiences, about forms, about songs, and things like that. Some of parents said, "I know this form, I know that one, I can write a story." And that is how that came about; they started writing about their experiences. We got the stories together, had them typed and then printed.

One of the things included in that booklet is when we first took the parents to the University of Texas in San Antonio. A lot of them had never been to a university and they were just amazed at some of the things that happen there. If you have the chance to read some of the experiences you will find them very interesting.

We were able to provide college credit to those parents who met the criteria at the university. We were not just giving college credits left and right. Parents had to go through the whole involved process of admission and registration.

This year we have the same set up. We are providing college credits for the parents who are interested, and who meet the criteria.

On the evaluations one of the things that kept coming up was the fact that parents had been provided with a lot of meaningful experiences, and this was why many of them were interested.

What I'm saying is that a training program for parents will make for more effective parent participation. I am not saying that our program is a complete success because, like every other program, it still has a long way to go before we can even think that it is that successful.

Often, when we go into a school district, we find that other federal programs are doing some of the same activities that we are doing. Some of our parents are in both Title I and Title VII and they find it meaningful to have the reinforcement for their participation provided to the teachers. Since we are not based within a district, we are fortunate to have many resources within our organization. We usually negotiate with the districts and say, "We are going to be training parents. How about us training your teachers so that they will be aware, and know what is going on?" Since we only work with Title VII schools, we are limited to a certain number of schools in each of the school districts.

One of the things I want to add is a description of our workshops. We have thirty contact-hours in each series; that is four hours per workshop. One of the things we always include in our workshops is activities designed to bring about a positive self concept. We want to build up the parent's self concept. We know that they have a lot to offer.

Built into our activities is communication skills development. We feel that this is a very necessary and strong part of the workshop. The content is provided through direct instruction and small and large group activities. And, of course, we evaluate all the workshops.

Another thing that has helped us a lot (keep in mind that we do not work directly for the school district) is that we are outside of the school district environment. We need to work very, very closely with the Bilingual Education Director and the Community Liaison. It is the school district's responsibility to identify those parents who are interested in participating in the training. Our role or responsibility is strictly to take care of the training. A lot of times parents actually think that we are working for the school district because we are at all the meetings and we have managed to establish very good relationships with parents who are in the program.

As part of the workshops we have built in field experiences. All of the parents that are participating in the Institute have to attend the workshops. They all have to go through a field experience and complete a special project.

Field experiences include attending parent advisory councils, board meetings, Title VII faculty meetings and professional or community conferences. Special projects are things like working in a community. For example, when we have workshops on developing and utilizing culturally relevant materials, we have the parents from one particular school form a committee so that the parent themselves can decide on activities they can use to work with or train the children.

About a month ago, when we had Lau hearings in San Antonio on the Bilingual Education Program, five parents from our Institute testified. We did not write anything for them to say; neither did any of the districts. What we did was give them a lot of information. We talked about the regulations, what they were, what they meant, the implications, etc. in language that the parents could understand: Spanish.

Two of the presentations at the Lau hearings were in Spanish. A few of of them were in English. We were very proud of the fact that the parents had a very, very strong information base and were able to testify. Their testimony was not anything technical. They simply said, "As a parent I feel that this should happen or should not happen." But the mere fact that they got up there and testified, I think means a lot to them and to us.

FEDERAL PROGRAMS

Dan Safran

We have with us this afternoon Shirley Jackson, Director of the Basic Skills Improvement Program; Rita Ray of the Emergency School Aid Act; Mary Mahoney of the Title VII Bilingual Program and Roland Yoshida of the Bureau of Education for the Handicapped.

What we have asked our federal program representatives to do is give us some background on their program's mission, their basic assumptions concerning home-school alliances, the activities encouraged by their programs, and the roles played by parents and school personnel, focusing on the upper elementary and junior high school grades.

These reports will contribute to the process on which we will then spend the balance of the conference: raising key questions that either derive from current program activities or from unsolved problems, and proposing answers for how practices at the local level can be improved.

Finally, this afternoon, we shall hear from Gerald Burns of the Department of Education who will describe the progress being made in a major study of parent involvement in four federal programs.

Note: The Basic Skills Improvement Program and the Emergency School Aid Act were consolidated into block grants under 1981 legislation. While states and localities may still carry on activities similareto these programs, beginning with the 1982-83 school year there will be less federal money for such activities and no federal program requirements, coordination or development work in these areas. While these changes could affect two of the five programs described in major ways, it is important to understand each federal program as a context for local programs as they existed at the time of the conference.

1. Basic Skills Improvement Program

Shirley Jackson, Director

This must be a week where we talk about parents as educators. I spent the weekend up at New York University in Albany in a parents-as-educators conference. That is where I was up until yesterday, and here I am today.

As Dan Safran indicated, I am Director of the Basic Skills Improvement Program, formally called "Right to Read."

Our legislation extended our efforts into the other areas of the basic skills. From our initial emphasis on reading we added writing (oral and written communication), and, under Title II, mathematics.

There are several parts of our legislation which address the roles of parents. I only want to focus today on one part which directs attention to the role of parents as literacy educators, or as reinforcers of instruction for the students.

Under Section 205, we have a total in-school program where you will find multiple roles for parents. One is the parent as a part of the planning group and subsequent advisory council. Another has parents being trained to reinforce what is going on in the school. In Section 208 we have parents who are functionally illiterate receiving direct instruction themselves on a one-to-one tutorial basis.

In every State Department of Education we have a basic skills coordinator who usually is also the curriculum coordinator for that State Department or is one of the assistant superintendents for instruction. That person has the role of providing training for administrators and curriculum experts within that state. One part of our legislation provides grants, available through the state, and some of these are for parent involvement. We also fund Reading is Fundamental at 6.5 million dollars. As you can see we have many pieces that impact on parent involvement.

Today I want to discuss Section 206 which is specifically focused on parents as literacy educators.

The basic assumption in this program may be expressed with a paraphrase of the old Chinese Proverb: one parent may be worth a thousand teachers. Schools alone do not educate: it is parents, not professional educators who teach some of the most basic skills, and certainly with a phenomenal rate of success. Parents teach youngsters the most important realistic skills. For example, one is how to talk. They teach them the most difficult psychomotor skills: how to handle a fork and spoon and how to tie shoe laces. They teach them the extremes of emotional and affective behavior: love and hate, fear and fearlessness. Our assumption is that reading and writing are simply logical extensions of the first learned linguistic, psychomotor and affective skills initially taught by the child's first actual teacher, his or her parents.

Some parents intuitively sense this ability and automatically assume an active rôle in the education of their children. Others are hesitant.

Quite frequently I get the question when I'm talking to parent groups, "Should I try to teach my child how to read? Should I try to teach my child how to write? After all, I'm just a parent, I'm not a professional educator. I don't know if I'm going to mess up my child trying to teach him to read."

I think that educators have successfully eroded parents' confidence in their abilities to teach their children.

If you are working with parents as literacy educators, it is essential that parents renew their confidence.

It is no wonder that parents feel a little bit uncomfortable in teaching reading. A mystique has grow up around instruction in the basic skills, and reading in particular. Many regular classroom teachers have been convinced that they cannot teach reading either. Unless you are a specialist, specially trained, you cannot teach reading. Why should we wonder why the confidence of parents has been eroded to a point that they feel that they cannot be effective teachers.

Restoring confidence has to be the first element. Generally, most of the programs we have funded under Section 206 address this issue of giving parents the confidence to carry out this role.

Another area that we have to talk about is the fact that many of the parents on whom we are targeting this development are poor. Many of them are undereducated and lack some of the literacy skills expected when you talk about the middle grades and the high schools. These are the very literacy and content skills they need to make them feel comfortable as active reinforcers of their childrens instruction. I'm not only talking about poor parents. I can't tell you about how many friends I have with Masters Degrees and Ph.D's who refer some of their kids' mathematics problemsto my husband, who is a math person in our family. This is often because the math that their kids are doing at the high school level may be three or four steps beyond where they are. When you add to this the undereducation of poor parents, then it is clear that you must build supports into your parent training program. Complicating all this is the fact that in this country we have 60 percent of women working out of the home. The old-fashioned model in which the parent who does best is the mother who is home all day, who interacts actively with her child while she is going through her household chores, who has time to stop and reinforce and talk about what is going on, is no longer applicable. And, as more and more women at all levels of this society are actively engaged in employment situations, the viability of this model will weaken.

We're interested in parent training. We've got to think about alternative ways of meeting the schedules of parents who work during the day. We can no longer say they are not interested in their children because we held a meeting at 1:00 o'clock and they did not come. These are some of the kinds of the kind of things that some of the projects are taking into consideration.

Under Title II, Section 206, we have 1.5 million dollars in grants

to develop demonstration programs and training programs. My total budget is 40 million dollars, so this is just one part.

We have just recently funded thirty demonstration programs designed to show ways of having parents work with their children directly in reinforcing the instructional program of the school, or to use volunteers or surrogates. Since we have a lot of working parents we had better start thinking about directing the training not only to parents, but to surrogates who may be upper elementary school kids or people in the community who are available, foster grandparents or whatever. We are going to have to re-think the role of parents as reinforcers.

Our program is not a targeted program, which means that we can serve a wide socio-economic range. We have projects in Montgomery County, Maryland; we have bilingual programs; we have all kinds of programs. I will give you a smattering of what some of those programs are designed to do.

The focus of these programs is to go through what we call a joint dissemination review panel in order to become validated models and be disseminated through the national diffusion network.

Let me tell you what our legislation tells us we are supposed to do, and give you a sample of our projects and what they look like.

The statute says the Secretary shall support activities designed to enlist the assistance of parents and volunteers working with schools to improve the skills of children in reading, mathematics, and oral and written communication.

There are two activities that can be supported under this:

(1) Development and dissemination of materials with appropriate training that parents may use in the home to improve the children's performance. (2) Voluntary training activities for parents and volunteers to encourage them to assist their children in developing basic skills.

Let me give you an example of some of the kinds of things that we have funded under this Act. In the Indiana State Department of Education there is a program that is designed to disseminate more widely a 15-program TV series on

reading and oral communication. The program will produce and disseminate a six-program math series, publish TV planning guides, present workshops for parents (plus in-service for requesting schools) and distribute fourteen modules for parents who involve their children (pre-school through grade twelve) in developing the basic skills.

As you can see, one of the ways that people are reaching out to the working parent is through television and having as support the kinds of materials being developed there.

One of the other programs is designed to examine the usefulness of recorded telephone messages as a way of getting information to parents regarding questions they may have in helping their children with the basic skills and with their homework.

Quite a few programs are tied into the state's competency-based instruction activities. One example is a multi-county project. The purpose is to capitalize on and coordinate existing efforts within six districts to teach forty parents to use home-based basic skills activities. The parent materials are keyed by grade level to South Carolina's educational objectives. The schools are keying this material to the educational objectives as well as developing appropriate parent materials.

Most of these programs are funded for a two-year demonstration period. Some are funded for three years. We will soon have a publication out describing these programs in detail, where they are located, and what kinds of material they have available.

2. Emergency School Aid Program

Rita Ray

It is always a pleasure to talk about the Emergency School Aid Act, because I believe in it thoroughly and that is the thing that makes it work.

The Emergency School Aid Act has two purposes. Until this year it had three.

1. One purpose is to provide financial assistance to meet the special needs incident to the elimination of minority group isolation, segpegation, and discrimination among students and faculty in elementary and secondary schools.

2. Another purpose is to encourage the voluntary elimination, reduction, and prevention of minority group isolation in elementary and secondary schools with substantial proportions of minority group students.

Now, what makes you eligible? If you have a desegregation plan, or if you are planning to implement a desegregation plan, there are funds available in this program. We want to see all the discrimination removed as soon as possible.

I worked for many years as a teacher and a principal and a trainer of teachers, and I happen to know that in the northern part of the United States we have a tendency to say there is no discrimination.

In the south, where we have had dual school systems, we have had a tendency to emphasize discrimination there. Don't kid yourself, it's all over.

There is a growing awareness that we also need to eliminate sex discrimination and national origin discrimination. Sometimes we need someone to awaken us to the fact. So what do we have to do? Some of the activities that we have in this program are: The training of school staff; the provision of additional staff members; the development of new curriculum methods, practices, techniques and materials for children from all racial, ethnic and economic background for innovative , educational activities; community

relations activities, planning, evaluation and dissemination; the provision of compensatory services to Title I children who are moved from a Title I school to a non-Title I school if it is for the purpose of reducing racial isolation; activities to prevent and eliminate the recurring and continuing problems resulting from the implementation of a qualifying desegregation plan.

Anything that is handed down in a court order can be funded in this program. This is the important part. The law says that in recruiting and hiring teacher aides to assist in carrying out a program or projects under the section, the local education agency shall give preference to parents of children affected by the implementation of the qualifying plan.

The regulations say that when you prepare your application, you must consult with the advisory committee composed of parents of children enrolled in the ESAA schools and the teachers, and at least half of the members of the advisory committee must be parents. Now, it doesn't say whether they must be parents of children affected by the program. However, it is required that at least half of the members be members of a minority group, which is very, very important in our program.

Now what are some of the things that parents do? I think that perhaps in ESAA I have never picked up an application that came in for ESAA funds that did not have requirements for parents in the program, because we mandate it.

Secondly, when a panel looks at an application sent in for ESAA funds, one of the things they evaluate is how parents have been involved in the preparation of that application, not just in reviewing it, but in the preparation of the application. Also, the committee considers the comments from parents most important. Those comments are read by a panel and evaluated.

We also fund non-profit organizations within a district which has a desegregation plan. In effect, this NPO, non-profit organization, helps to support the implementation of that plan or it can help the local education agency to develop a plan.

What are some of the things parents do? They themselves develop project applications and components within an application. They also conduct needs assessments, because anything funded must be designed to meet a need resulting from a desegration plan. Parents plan project components, they establish project objectives, they monitor program implementation. We find that while in some districts parents do not monitor programs, in most districts parents do.

Parents evaluate whether the program is meeting the goals. Until this year, parents reviewed and signed off on budgets. That role has now been taken out. In some districts, parents establish requirements for hiring parents and select project professionals and para-professionals. Parents also evaluate project staff and handle complaints. They are involved throughout the process before the application comes to us. Many parents also do surveys in an effort to develop the needs assessment.

The local ESAA Advisory Committee, which is federally mandated, has an average size of about 19.8 members. Eighty-eight percent of those people on the Advisory Committee were representatives from the community and had voting rights.

I have seen so many exciting programs in which parents are active. I want to mention three:

(1) Long Island University in New York. I spent eight years working with ESAA in New York City. At that time we had a lot of bilingual programs which have now been transferred to Title VII. And we also had Title IV out at the State Department of Education, the magnet schools, the centers for national origin with which we worked very, very closely.

But at Long Island University, since there were so many parents who did not speak English, they assessed the interests of the community. To me the word interest is the most important word when it comes to students and parents. Earlier, we heard the Detroit representatives say, "If the parents are in the bowling alley I go to the bowling alley." That is it. You must assess the interest of parents so that you are able to build from that angle. Well, here

they assessed and found that some crocheted, some managed to knit, some liked to draw, some liked to sew. They brought the parents in, and by bringing the parents in because of their interests in the use of patterns, giving instructions, etc., they were able to teach them some English. At the same time, they had interpreters and were able to teach them some of the rules and regulations of the school, what they could expect, and how to get them into the classroom. They even took them to the various schools.

(2) In Boston, parents were working in the Glasser program, the alternative program for discipline. Parents work in centers at each school. The program emphasizes parents and students working together in the schools with the help of an occasional counselor

(3) Buffalo has the most exciting magnet school I have ever seen. Kids who have not been able to do things were working with parents to prepare food. Parents are coming into the classrooms as resources.

I think we are going to hear more and more about the use of parents as resource personnel for the extended school day and for enrichment. This is where we are putting emphasis--on enrichment, and on the extended school day where we can build around the child's interest and teach him/her to read and write.

3. Bilingual Education

Mary Mahoney

Usually when I come to talk and represent the Office of Bilingual Education and Minority Language Affairs or Title VII, someone will say, "Mahoney, what is someone with that name doing in the Office of Bilingual Education?" I am sure some of you have thought that way. What I wanted to share with you is that besides Mahoney, we have Goldberg, we have Tripolette, we have Gould, we have Sullivan. This is an indication of the wide diversity of language groups we represent.

At this time, we are serving approximately 72 different language groups. Of course, Title VII as you know deals with the needs of children with limited English speaking proficiency.

Title VII awards money to local LEA's and SEA's to assist them in meeting the educational needs in limited English proficiency students.

Our appropriations have just been completed. The largest category was basic skills programs which are programs relevant to the levels we are talking about here. $97 million went to basic programs. We funded about 170 new ones. All in all, including continuations and new efforts, we have more than 500 programs.

The other major services of Title VII besides the basic skills program, are training, Bilingual Education Support Centers, Materials Development Centers, a Fellowship Program, Dean of Education grants, and demonstration grants.

Parent involvement has always been an integral part of this program. In the beginning, in 1968, parental involvement was encouraged and the response varied. In some cases there was involvement and in many cases there was not. So in 1974, in the new regulations, a requirement was included for the PAC, the Parent Involvement Committee. That committee was to be consulted regarding the administration and the operation of the programs.

In 1978, the regulations were revised. A parent advisory council was required and local education agencies had to assure parental involvement in planning the proposal, reviewing the draft, and preparing comments. There also had to be some assurance that a PAC would be established after the grant was funded.

The other area that we deal with is training, especially training of parents. Several examples are represented at this conference.

From a national point of view, the issue we are dealing with is how do we do capacity building on the part of the LEA or the SEA to institutionalize these programs so that they would contiue when the federal funding stops. Our grants at this time are funded for a maximum of three years. Previous to this summer they were funded for five.

We are constantly aware that American schools are multi-ethnic. What we are trying to do in our program is enable parents of limited English proficiency students to participate and negotiate in very complex ethnic, political and educational settings. In some cases neither parents nor educators are accustomed to dealing with multi-ethnic structures.

4. Office of Special Education

Ron Yoshida

What I want to do is to quickly go through some of our programs. After listening to people today, I really feel like a born-again humanist.

I'm sure all of you have heard of PL 94-142, the Education for All Handicapped Persons Act. These are magic words school people use, your superintendent, your supervisor, your parents. Everyone throws this phase around. I hope I don't have to review the law now. I think that the various different federal requirements for parental involvement are very interesting. While other federal personnel have different perspectives on the law, I tend to see everything in terms of the handicapped. They are my interest groups.

I am told that, in the Department of Education, there are 57 rules and regulations concerning parental involvement. One of the questions I would raise is: how clear are parents, as well as school people, in understanding the objectives for parental involvement? Are we looking for systemic change? What is the nature of systemic change? What are the roles of individuals in the process? How much commitment and support are needed? What mechanism and strategies are we talking about in order to affect systemic change?

When you come to PL 94-142 you are really talking about both: A systemic change in terms of who's involved and tremendous changes on the part of individuals.

To be very honest with you I would hate to be a parent. I am not a parent with a handicapped child and I would hate to be a school person who has to face that parent, because what the law is really asking for, is a basic organizational change in the school. We are asking these organizational changes to happen very rapidly.

Many parent groups want it now. School people say, "Wait a minute, we just

got it, give us some time." "No", parents say, "we want it now!" Furthermore, with school people trying to absorb these 57 other types of regulations, I'm wondering whether or not we've just become very reactive, failing to have set aside sufficient time to plan.

Several questions must be asked: What are the objectives of parental involvement? Where do we meet those objectives and with what programs? Who should do it? How much support is needed? And, how much am I as a superintendent, school district person, or teacher, willing to commit myself to this particular effort? We are talking about a change in philosophy and we are asking for a commitment to a philosophy.

These are some issues I want to raise with you. I'm not saying give the schools a break. Nor am I saying that, from the school person's standpoint, the parents are all wrong. There are going to be mistakes. There are going to be a lot of shifts and changes that have to be made. So let's begin to plan for such changes as opposed to merely being reactive.

The reason why I bring this up relates to studies and programs conducted by the Office for Special Education which looked at parental involvement, participation at IEP meetings, etc.

Our Office does technical assistance and cooperated with the Office of Civil Rights in identifying good strategies for informing parents about their rights. We've found that no state in the country is in compliance with the procedural safeguard requirements of the law.

We support personnel development in the sense that you can apply for funds to train parents and your own school staff for greater awareness of the laws, for skill development, etc.

Finally we have some service schools in which we are trying to develop a parent network. Five states, Massachusetts, New Hampshire, Illinois, Ohio and Indiana, are begining to develop techniques whereby parents can assist other parents in getting services for their handicapped children.

Now with the above as a brief overview, I want to go into some issues just to tease your mind a little bit. I took the word "alliance" very seriously when I came here. Then I thought about it; there are all kinds of alliances. You have alliances for mutual cooperation and mutual goals. Then you could have alliances that remind you a little bit about the non-aggression pact that was signed back in 1939 between Hitler and Stalin. You can have all kinds of alliances.

But the alliances implied by PL 94-142 are cooperative kinds of alliances. I mentioned that 50 states, all jurisdictions in the country, are not in compliance with the law. What we find is that most people are not even aware of the requirements of the law. The challenge is to develop awareness of regulations. Yet, our own studies show that, even if they are aware, the majority of school people don't really want parents to be involved in the development of individualized educational programs. We know that. So, a key question is:

What are the necessary policy changes that have to be made at the state level, as well as at the local level if you really want to capitalize on involvement? That is why I suggest you start off by analyzing your own school district analyzing who is on your staff, and determining what skills are needed in order to transact this parent-school alliance.

I want to pose a question Did you learn anything about strategies that you didn't know before you came here? Everybody says, you have to be up front, you've got to be honest, and all of this is not that easy to do. There is a sign in signing for the deaf that says "you say something to someone We have videotaped many IEP meetings and all we see is people telling people what's going to happen with their child.

Perhaps, what we are looking for is more dialogue in discussion. Someone said, you need good listening skills. In terms of honesty, it is a very hard thing to tell a parent that your child is handicapped since there may be different expectations for the child.

Another thing I've seen in conferences between parents and schools is that, by the time the child goes through a year or two years of the program, the parent is saying, "Wait a minute, this child is supposed to be normal". You would be surprised again by what we find in our videotapes, by how often schools do not give prognosis statements about what is going to happen to children. Furthermore, at the end of a meeting where people are saying what they really believe a child can do, you get the school peoples' statement, and you ask the parents what do you think your child is going to be able to do. And when you compare the two, what a difference there is in terms of expectations; No wonder that, at the end of two years, parents may be saying, "Wait a minute, you didn't fulfill your promises." No promises were ever made and no one was really clear in terms of what was occurring with that child.

I find interesting what I heard of the programs in Detroit, Arlington, Oakland, San Antonio and Miami. Over and over one hears about the need for honesty, for listening, for being up-front in communications.

One of the problems we are discussing in our own analytical study is how does one teach someone to listen. We have this great profession of marriage and family counseling developing in the country. Here are people in families who are intimately involved with one another who can't communicate all that well. The question is then, what kinds of skills do we need to communicate with those clients that come through the door? It's not just the schools which have the responsibility to listen, be honest, to question, and to try to get some clarity as to what is being said, but that responsibility also belongs to parents.

How best do we structure something in programs that
How much time would it take? As in anything concerning relationships, it takes lots of time. You want to be friends with someone, you want to be someone's wife, husband, you want to deal in a work situation: It takes time. There's not all that much time in the world, so it's important to set priorities, to plan,

to decide how best to develop these kinds of relationships.

Finally, one of the most unfortunate things about PL 94-142 may be adversarial outcomes. I'm presenting my personal view here rather than speaking for the Office. PL 94-142 is one of the very few pieces of federal legislation that allows an administrative remedy. The question is: could you have a strong alliance between parents and schools when, in fact, the two groups may be representing such different interests? We find that alliances are great, as long as people agree and don't get at the hard core issues.

Once we get at the hard core issues there seems to be a split. One thing we've observed all throughout PL 94-142 is the increase in due process hearings and mediations. I see a lot of people putting in a lot of time developing very formal kinds of negotiation structures after everyone has come to a disagreement. I wonder whether or not we need to come closer, or whether dialogue is even possible. As one parent told me, "You're asking me to compromise on my child's life, my child 's success. How can I do it? Its a matter of dollars and cents to you. It's my child's life to me."

And so, these are just some of the issues that I wanted to raise:

1. Do we need overall plans for our school districts?

2. Are we clear in our objectives for parental involvement? Do we really want decision-makers? Do we want people to just come and help us in raising money? What role do we really want people to play?

3. How much resources do we have to put into that effort if we are truly committed to such an effort?

4. Concerning the people involved: what skills do we need to develop in people engaged in these efforts?

Now, I don't want to leave you wiped out with all this negative preaching. I do want to tell you that the Division of Media Services also runs a grants program. One piece of our grants program is developing curricula, parental training, materials, etc. That competition will be opening up this month. I

would encourage you to send a letter to the Division of Media Services in the Office of Special Education formerly the Bureau of Education for the Handicapped, if you are interested in applying for such money.

5. Federal Parent Involvement Study

Gerald Burns, Office of Evaluation and Dissemination

This is not really an evaluation of parent involvement. The study is not concerned with which districts have good parent involvement, which districts have bad parent involvement, or defining the standards by which we judge parent involvement.

This study which began in 1978, is divided into three stages, and involves four separate federal programs. The programs involved are: The Emergency School Aid Act (ESAA), Title VII Program, Title I Program, and Follow Through. Within each of those programs the first stage involves looking at levels of parent involvement in the type of activities parents become involved in, primarily formal activities required by federal regulation, and writing up the results, essentially the frequencies with which parents participate in certain activities.

The second stage of the study was to look at selected districts more closely to determine what, exactly, is happening in the districts. Those districts, and there are about 50 of them, with the sample of about 150 schools scattered within those districts, were selected both on the basis of a high level of parent involvement and what one would call a low level of parent involvement.

We will look at not only what seem to be good programs, but bad ones as well to find out what the factors are that either inhibit or support parent involvement activities. We are looking at the whole range of activities within each district. For the site study, parents, teachers, aides principals, superintendents, coordinators, and other people who have some relationships with the parent activities, are being interviewed and observed. It is sort of a new thing for us to not take their word for it but to see if, for example, a PAC meeting actually does happen. You would be surprised how often people don't remember what really happened in a PAC meeting or how many meetings they had.

We are also considering whether to exercise the options to what is called the validation stage which would involve going back to some selected districts to see if what we found still remains or is changed over time; and to determine what methods we might want to use to disseminate the findings so that they are most effective when given to practitioners.

PANEL DISCUSSION OF PREVIOUS PROGRAM PRESENTATIONS: IMPLICATIONS FOR PROGRAM DEVELOPMENT

Dan Safran, conference chair

We heard from five local programs that were quite diverse in what they've been doing, how they've been doing it, and the levels at which they've been operating. But what they have in common is that they have attempted to develop home-school alliances in the upper elementary, middle school, or junior high school years. A significant aspect of the local program presentations is that we had staff and parent perspectives provided. We had information presented by people operating from a local program perspective, rather *than* what we might usually tend to hear namely a research perspective. In the late afternoon we had the opportunity to hear from four of the federal programs that emphasize parent involvement: Bilingual Education or Title VII Program; ESAA or Emergency School Aid Act; the Office of Special Education; and the new Basic Skills Program.

The information we received yesterday was as comprehensive as it was valuable. I appreciate very deeply the panel that we're going to hear from this morning. Their job is to start us off on the task of analyzing and discussing the information we heard yesterday. They will draw on their own backgrounds and experiences in order to examine the process of building home-school alliances.

On the panel are (1) Hope Leichter, Teachers College, Columbia University; (2) Joan Lipsitz, Director of the Center for Early Adolescence, University of North Carolina; (3) Gladys Knott, Department of Special Education, Kent State University; (4) Kay Pasley, Department of Child and Family Studies, Washington State University; and (5) Larry Cuban, Superintendent of Schools, Arlington, Virginia.

Before beginning I want to review the main purpose of this conference; to take a look at home-school alliances at grades 4-9 to obtain information that will help in the improvement of practice at the local level. This is a new venture, in a sense, because most of our interests in home-school alliances have been in early childhood education and lower elementary school.

We are asking this panel to review the information presented yesterday and speak to three major questions:

(1) Are there any common factors associated with program success or with what makes programs of this sort at these grade levels work? And, if so, what are these common factors?

(2) What common obstacles hinder the success of those kinds of programs at these grade levels?

(3) What key issues or questions must be raised when considering the improvement of practice in home-school alliance programs of grades 4-9?

Gladys Knott, Kent State University

Yesterday, parents and professionals spoke about information needs. Discussions were relevant to different information needs for parents and professionals for children in grades four through nine. I'd like to stress that the information needs of parents are not constant; they change. Several factors come into play and affect types of information parents need.

For several years, I worked with parents of children of junior and senior high school age. These students were associated in some way with medical centers, social agencies or schools. Although parents and their children had a common purpose for affiliating with a central social agency, including participation in group counselling, recreation and school enrichment programs, each parent had needs which required specific attention. Although children and youth could be grouped according to interests, grade level performance, age or some other criterion, the needs of parents varied. They varied according to economic stability of the home, domestic security or husband/wife relationships in the family. School achievement of children in the family brought on needs for various types of information--some related to teacher-pupil relationships, failure, education programs, such as college prep vs vocational training. Parents needed information about discipline procedures in the school, and in the home. They needed information pertinent to their children's selection of friends and social privileges. There were many types of information that parents requested. However, of these needs, parents were seemingly more in need of information relevant to what happens in school that causes change in their children. Their primary concern related to how children learn, how they manifest change in behavior from one grade to the next. We see this problem more vividly when we think about the differences in parent participation between grade one and grade four, between grade four and grade nine, especially. The differences between grade levels are significant, and they are more profound between grade four and grade nine.

Returning to one of the primary concerns for parents, several years ago and even today, that is - how children learn, and what causes change in children's behavior, parents are seeking to know more about the process of education. They recognize that the child is acquiring new knowledge and information in an academic manner. For example, it is recognized that the child may learn vocabulary or new terms in reading. However, it is partly the way parents relate their learning of terms to the child's learning of terms that suggests some difficulty in the parents' understanding of what is happening in school. That a child learns an idea in one situation and is expected to solve problems in different or novel situations is often a complex problem in parental understanding of the education process. Often, parents do not grasp the whole of a learning situation, the child is able to present only a segment of a problem, usually the segment that presents difficulty. Without understanding how information is presented, how the presentation of information differs from their own learning experiences, parents are at a loss in helping the child. On the other hand, the child may hold several perceptions about the situation. A parent is unable to help--therefore the parent may be viewed as being illiterate. Because parents recognize that they are unable to help, they present the child with an evaluation that he/she is dumb or doesn't listen to what goes on in the classroom. This situation points clearly to parent information as well as learning needs.

In this regard, we must recognize and deal with facts pertinent to adult literacy. There are parents who are unable to deal with verbal/symbolic behavior in the written form. More explicitly, there are parents who can't read and write. Hence, some of the demands placed on children by teachers are not understood. Take for example the situation in which the teacher assumes background knowledge is present in order to solve a problem. Similarly, many parents are under the assumption that the school has full responsibility for providing the child with whatever he/she needs in order to learn. Without communication between parent and teacher, mis-communication is apparent. More important, the child is caught

in the middle. One question immediately arises--For how long will the child endure?

The result of this situation could be a part of what I experienced in the city of Chicago. Adolescents, age 15-16 years, were enrolled in the ninth grade. However, their reading levels required that they be placed in Basic English. During that time, Basic English was below fifth grade. That is, students enrolled in Basic English were minimally four to five years below grade level in reading achievement. However, they were not classified as mentally retarded.

What I've painted is a dismal picture. However, it can be improved. It is during adolescence that researchers contend that individuals become aware of the social structure of our society, what is acceptable in society and what the consequences of unacceptable behavior and progress mean. It is also during adolescence that many parents begin to recognize the real consequences of their children's early school failures. Their children will not qualify for jobs!

One helpful aid for me in Chicago was to provide information to parents, to seek their help and support in improving reading achievement. Another aid was to provide adolescents with the same information--that reading failure was an impediment to economic and social success. As I reported in Reading Improvement, 1979, #16 students were informed about language differences and how their home and community language would affect later success. Further, information and instruction were provided to ameliorate problems and following one semester of language/reading intervention, progress was noted. Not all parents provided full support which included purchasing supplementary reading material. However, there were many who went overboard to "help my child get a better job than what I have." The parents, in this situation, presented job attainment as their reason for support. However, they also recognized that education is often the key. What parents needed and received in this situation was specific information as to the causes of some of their children's reading failure, what could be done

about it, and how, with their permission, it was going to be done. One important result was that adolescents progressed to the next level in the school curriculum. Could this success have happened without parent support? The answer is not available, but I can reveal that the task was much easier with parents supporting classroom instruction.

This brings us to circumstances in which parents have pre-set, negative, immovable ideas about school--for whatever reasons, some parents manifest school negativism. Faced with such a problem, one may choose to work with another parent who has contact with the disgruntled parent, one may choose a child's peers to exert influence. This can be done through group assignments, for example. It may be the child him or herself who can exert influence on the parents. We have to be realistic and honest however. In essence, we must acknowledge that you cannot win them all, all the time. On the other hand, we cannot give up without trying.

I would like to conclude with several questions

1. What are specific rules, roles and relationships between parent and teacher that will enable two-way communication?

2. What do we need to know about adult life spans--i.e. positions in adult life, in relation to children in order to facilitate school learning?

3. How can we identify sources of positive socialization in the family, i.e. between parents?

4. How can we assist children in perceiving and learning to evaluate attitudes, beliefs, and values found in the family?

5. How can schools involve parents? Involvement here denotes participation in the education process of a child, not just being a member of the advisory council which meets during the extent of a federally funded grant.

6. How can schools make parental involvement a meaningful activity? a part of community life? This goes beyond the Friday evening swim social, for example.

A child's schooling should be an integral part of family life. We need to seek to eliminate school-community alienation. In this regard, we need to examine what happened before tax levies began to fail across the country and that partly caused parents to cast a vote of non-support for schools their children attended.

Hope Jensen Leichter, Teachers College, Columbia University *

I assume my role is to raise questions for discussion about the relation of parents to the community in home-school alliance programs. I am going to talk from my own experience. I was asked to speak as a researcher and to make a link between research and practice since I have written on families and communities as educators and am conducting two family as educator projects sponsored by the National Institute of Education. However, it is perhaps not even known that at one time some years ago I directed a family-school alliance program, a paraprofessional training program. I shall therefore speak from the point of view of my practice experience about areas in which we need to develop research knowledge. This brings me to one of the basic questions that I wish to raise, that of the time perspectives in our knowledge of practice.

Ten years ago, I could have been here together with a parent in our program as some of the contributors to the sessions have been. Hearing them talk with enthusiasm about their programs gives me a sense of nostalgia. These are wonderful programs. The reports we have heard at the conference are indeed exciting, and have a real sense of accomplishment and mastery in problem solving. But early excitement does not always result in the continuation of programs. One basic question that I wish to raise concerns how programs that are exciting in their initial phase can develop over time and how they can

*Due to a tape recording failure, we were unable to obtain a transcript of Dr. Leichter's comments to the conference. However, Dr. Leichter was able to reconstruct most of her remarks for publication while acknowledging the difficulty of recapturing the fullness of her remarks and context in which they were made. Her efforts are deeply appreciated.

become institutionalized and retained. In the case of paraprofessionals in many places, they have come to be accepted by professionals and teachers unions, and employed in continuing positions. In our program some even obtained high school equivalency, and a few went on to college. But none of this was clear at the early stages of our program or at the time of early evaluations. This raises the basic question of whether our expectations with regard to timing are realistic. And whether it is possible for programs to accomplish their goals in the time allowed

Often I believe this is not the case. We therefore need to strive for more realistic understanding of the development of programs over time. In the case of the paraprofessional program that I was involved in, paraprofessionals worked in the elementary school classrooms in New York City. They took courses in education at Teachers College, Columbia University, reading, writing and arithmetic, art as reading, music as math, and there was presumed to be a career ladder that could lead to a high school equivalency, college credit, and eventually to work as teachers. It was also assumed--a standard assumption at that time--that having paraprofessionals in the school would bring the culture of the home into the school; and, it was also assumed that exposure to the school would bring knowledge about the school into the home. It is my impression that, in fact, this did occur; parents learned about the school, teachers learned about families and communities. As I heard the speeches yesterday, I was struck by the sense of success in these areas and I could hear the parents with whom I worked talking in a similar vein about what they had learned from being in the school and the faculty and the teachers in the program talking about how much they had learned from the parents.

I hate to bring a note of sadness into the exhilaration that has characterized the conference so far. But the experience with the program I was involved in

is important since it, too, had an early sense of exhilaration. Unfortunately, two years after it started, the program closed. It had been funded through the Ford Foundation with the concept of "seed money." Funds were not available for continuing funding. Problems arose with respect to college credit, admissions criteria, and the school unions. Some of these problems, as I indicated, were eventually solved in other programs, and paraprofessionals have become well institutionalized in many places.

Nonetheless, this raises the basic question that must be addressed as to how programs are organized over time, what the beginning, the middle and the end of the program looks like. It is particularly important to understand program development over time during the early phases of program excitement, so that some realistic sense of their course can be anticipated.

A second question about the knowledge that is needed in attempting to develop programs for improving home school alliances and the ways in which education takes place in the home derives from the fact that knowledge of the child's educational development does not come from professionals alone. Parents, grandparents, and those in everyday life play important educational roles and have important knowledge about educational development. In two N.I.E. projects being conducted at the Elbenwood Center for the Study of the Family as Educator at Teachers College, Columbia University, we are studying "the family's role in the acquisition of literacy for learning" and "cognitive processes in everyday family life." In these two projects we are seeing the importance of events in families' everyday life as the arena for education. A critical issue in this respect--and this point was evident in a number of presentations earlier in the conference--is the need to recognize the fact that everyday activities have educational potential. For example, the print that surrounds families in a literate society in their everyday activities offers endless opportunities for

use of literacy. Cooking, shopping, sorting and placing food on shelves, etc. are all activities which afford a considerable amount of educational potential, not merely in the general sense that all life educates, but in the more specific sense as opportunities for the development of skills needed in school. Yet often this potential is not recognized. Therefore, one area in which we need to develop knowledge is in redefining events in everyday life in terms of their educational potential.

A final point that I would like to raise for discussion concerns the location of practice knowledge, if one assumes that it derives from both professionals, as well as parents and other family members themselves. Clearly there are important insights in the kinds of experiences that have been discussed at this conference, and one role of research and research organizations could be to find ways of collecting and retaining this knowledge and experience so that it may become available to future practitioners. I have in mind here the kind of "living archive" that Margaret Mead pointed to in writing of the need for "The Conservation of Insight," (Margaret Mead, "The Conservation of Insight--Educational Understanding of Bilingualism," in Hope Jensen Leichter, Ed. Families and Communities as Educators), insight that involves as she puts it "the continuing active participation of human beings." One important role of a research initiating institution is to work toward the creative development of new forms of research archives in which the excitement of the experience in particular programs--the kinds of excitement and success we have heard discussed in this conference--can be retained, with, as Margaret Mead urges, precise specification of the contexts in which it occurs, so that practice knowledge may remain alive rather than inert.

Joan Lipsitz Center for Early Adolescence University of North Carolina

I have some very different things to say this morning from what we have heard so far. As a "reader", I have tried to put some things in order. Itis hard to come to a conference with no notes at all and be told that you are going to "react". What I have decided is that I can't put things in order.

We heard about many different types of home-school alliances. Yet we heard very little about early adolescence, which for me is approximately ages 10-15. Therefore, I have almost no conclusions about early adolescence to draw from yesterday or today, and I can't really say very much about common factors or programmatic obstacles from yesterday's presentations. But in terms of my home-work assignment, I do have some "key issues and questions" to raise.

First, let me summarize a little bit of what I tried to do last night with the different types of programs we heard of. I went back to notes from previous conferences sponsored by NIE and it was all there. There was a conference at NIE on Families As Educators held December 10-11, 1979, and there was a laundry list of different types of programs that were described: Parents as Tutors; Parents as Reinforcers of School Learning; Parents as Models for Reading; Parents as Co-Planners of Children's Educational Plans; Parents as Home Work Managers; Parents as School Volunteers. Yesterday, we heard about all of these again.

In other words, we continue to talk about parents as motivators or programs that motivate parents so that they will motivate their children. There was a conference on Parent Education and Public Policy at the University of North Carolina this past year, also sponsored by NIE, where participants talked about four types of parent involvement: Parents as More Effective Teachers of Their Own Children; Parents as Better Parents; Parents as Supporting Resources for the School; and Parents as Policy Makers. All day yesterday, we heard about these different types of programs.

Implicit or explicit in everything that we heard and in those typologies is the assumption that parents will be given new competencies and new knowledge to guide their relationships with their children so as to increase the cognitive and social development of their children. In other words, parents become the agents of change in their children's lives. We saw all of these in varying degrees and with varying emphases in yesterday's program presentations. Implied in all the presentations was a sense of parental empowerment. Roland Yoshida asked the question, "Is this type of alliance possible when there is so much room for adversarial relationships?" Berlin Kelly asked "Given the role of unemployment, what's really possible?"

My task in this context is to raise some key issues when you are considering the improvement of home-school alliances.

In terms of pre and early adolescent development, what is possible for home-school alliances? The first thing that comes to my mind are barriers. There are barriers in terms of the individual's characteristics, the individual and his or her developmental characteristics, barriers in terms of family interactions as children approach and enter puberty, and barriers in terms of larger social issues. After discussing barriers I want to look at some hopeful things.

If we look at the tasks of early adolescence as children are entering puberty, there is, first of all, the need for what some call "desatellizing" or increasing autonomy from parents. This is not necessarily autonomy in terms of values or norms but in behavior and in terms of "whom I associate with." That is a significant barrier towards our pressing for more parental involvement exactly at the point of a young person's life when he or she is starting to seek autonomy or to desatellize from the home.

A second barrier is that while there is a need for growing areas of competence, there is an exquisite self-consciousness about lack of competence during adolescence. It takes a very special relationship between an adolescent

and an adult for the adolescent to be willing and able to show areas of lack of competence. This is true expecially in those areas that are identified in the peer group as being childish, and that includes not knowing how to read not knowing how to write, not knowing how to compute. The special relationship is not necessarily a parental one; it's often with a very significant adult and not the parent, and that may pose a barrier to home-school alliances.

A third barrier is that the greatest number of underachievers in our schools are boys, and the greatest number of available parents are women. Some boys have trouble with this not only in terms of normative adolesent development, but also because of cultural mores within this country. Some boys have trouble increasing their dependence on mothers at adolescence. They withdraw; they do not want to engage in family activities or in joint activities for a while, especially in that son-mother relationship.

A fourth barrier is the importance of the peer group. There is a kind of "epidemiology" of behaviors among peer groups, and I am not using this word negatively. Peer groups differ so much that sometimes we can barely account for where the behaviors start and what causes peer groups to look so different from one another. If there is an epidemiology of school rejection in a peer group, there is very little that one parent can do without engaging the interest of the entire peer group. That would be quite a task to ask a parent to undertake!

Fifth, as young person becomes an adolesent, he or she for the first time in life has a sense of a personal future, a sense of destiny. Going back to what Berlin Kelly said, if what that future is saying is that "the doors are closed" in terms of opportunity, if the young person is growing up in the inner city with a 40% youth unemployment rate, the typical motivation that we use for the types of programs we are talking about, which have to do with that sense of future, will not work.

Incidentally, I used to be a junior high English teacher and my students would say to me, "But why do I have to learn this?" I used to say, "Do you want to end up pushing a broom?" One day, I discovered that the San Francisco sanitation workers signed a contract and were making twice as much money as I was. I had to drop that one. But what I am talking about is something much more serious: sometimes you can't end up even pushing a broom. When there is no broom to push out there, what is the motivating force? All of these barriers come from characteristics of normal individual early adolescent development. I see them as natural barriers to the type of programs we are discussing.

Now I want to examine characteristics in the family. We have heard over and over again that there are more and more women in the labor force, and this phenomenon is not only related to single parents. More than 50% of married women whose children are young adolescents are now in the labor force. These people are not necessarily available to the types of programs that we have been talking about.

If you look at single parents, whether male or female, the amount of time that they have is very constrained. The emotional constraints have to be taken into account as well. It is very hard to go to yet another meeting in the evening when you have "hit the wall" at 7 o'clock at night, and that meeting is at 7:30. Even when the schools are accommodating themselves to parents by opening up the schools at night, parents will not necessarily have the emotional resources left to attend a 7:30 meeting.

If you look at the life stages that parents and adolescents are at, it's as if somebody made a big mistake. The status changes that are going on in parents and adolescents at the same time are like mirror images of each other. Young adolescents have this new sense of the future, middle-age parents have constricted sense of the future, often asking, "Is this really all that there is to life?" Exactly at the point that adolescents are involved in

their budding sexuality, their parents may be experiencing a waning sexuality. You can pick one area after another, and they are mirror images. It sets up some of the conflicts that parents unwittingly start with their adolescents out of a subconscious desire to knock the kid down rather than to face the internal mechanisms that are going on during middle age.

There is a lot which can be gleaned from the research that's not specifically on parent-family interactions. For instance, in Bachman's research from the Institute for Social Research at Michigan, he started at 10th grade, and he was sorry he started at 10th grade in looking at young men in a longitudinal study. One of the things that parents and kids said to him over and over again was, "It's calming down now." We find this in other studies, which together tell us that parent-child conflict tends to increase during the early adolescent years and to decrease, perhaps because of mutual accommodation to the disequilibrium of the earlier years, during middle adolescence. Meanwhile, we are addressing an age group whose parents are experiencing heightened conflict in the house when they barely get their child to take the garbage out let alone do homework. I am not talking about families under enormous stress, I am purposely avoiding that. I am talking about normal early adolescent development.

On a national perspective you have a really unfortunate convergence of women in the labor force and reduced spending. There is a lowering of two issues: Of resources with Proposition 13 and other tax revolts across the country, and inflation. Those institutions that were seen as the major socializing agencies-the museums, the parks, the Girls Clubs, the Boy's Clubs, the libraries their hours are being cut back exactly at a time when fewer mothers are at the home to welcome the child after school. If you look at possible school-community interactions, the community may well not be out there to interact. In fact, many schools are closing their doors after school lets out. We have a grea number of kids from 3 to 6 P.M. going home to empty houses with the community

offering them very little. Even when the schools want to reach out to create community school alliances, you can't necessarily count on the community being out there for you between 3-6 p.m.

For this age group, you also have a chaos of school organization. I find the linking together of grades 4-9 in this conference rather unwieldy, If you look at the types of schools that young adolescents are in, not counting K-6 schools which I consider elementary but all other schools with grades 6, 7 and 8 that are not K-6 schools, there are 34 different configurations of schools. You cannot expect the federal government to be able to set some sort of policy for 34 different configurations of schools. There is no other age group for which we have this number of configurations of schools.

This has to do with the lack of attention that has been paid to early adolescence for years and the fact that they are the most politically vulnerable age group. When there are court orders for desegregation or when we have to close schools because of demographic changes, it is in the middle group that the switches take place. Somehow, they are always expendable. We can put them down in the elementary school, open a new middle school, shift them up to the high school. That's the group that is getting shifted all the time. As a result, you can't just set a single policy or start a generalized training program. People in different communities are not working with the same school organizational structures.

In addition, there are no networks for research or training as for early childhood education. Since it is very usual for people who share concerns about this age group to get together, it is usually very difficult to find out what's going on, what the good programs are and what the research findings are for this age group.

Kay Pasley, Washington State University

In doing my homework for this session, I looked at the literature over the last twelve years related to parent-teacher relationships. I was struck by the fact that during the last two years there have been only five publications directly related to the parent-teacher relationship, only two of which are what I would call quality. In itself, that says a great deal about the way in which we, as educators and professionals, look at the subject. Yet, I am convinced from my experience and academic preparation, that the first and foremost link between the home and the school is the teacher. I'm going to begin here by sharing with you some of the factors which facilitate successful parent-teacher relationships, and then I'll talk about some factors which inhibit positive parent-teacher relationships.

We've been informed in the last day of meetings about examples of successful programs which enourage positive parent-teacher interaction. I also want to share with you some of what the literature says about common factors potentially leading us toward successful home-school alliances.

One of the most impressive aspects evident in the programs we've learned about here is the amount of support within a particular school system for the teachers themselves as they develop parent-teacher relationships. If, as a teacher, I am trying to initiate home-school interaction, I need to have other people around me who are doing the same thing. Thus, one factor needed to facilitate successful home-school relationships is the existence of a support group. In those programs which tend to fail, there are teachers who feelisolated from other teachers doing the same thing.

Another factor which particularly interested me was the attitude with which the teachers approached the topic of home-school interaction. As you might suspect, teachers who hold positive attitudes towards parents are those who tend to have a higher commitment to and more productive interaction with parents rather than those teachers who ask the parents to do no more than mundane tasks, calling it parent involvement. Such mundane tasks includechaperoning field trips. In early childhood education, the classic task assigned to parents in the name of parent involvement is "we need someone to clean the sinks or cut out circles for the art activity" As a parent, I could stay home to clean sinks; I don't need to come to school to do it. What is important is that teachers see parents as capable and worthwhile. (I'll speak later of some of the obstacles which inhibit such positive attitudes on the part of teachers.)

Another common factor in successful programs enouraging parent-teacher interaction is the abundance of "veteran" teachers. That is, those teachers holding more positive attitudes toward home-school alliances tend to be teachers with more experience in their profession. It is the new, inexperienced teacher who has unrealistic attitudes towards the potential for home-school alliances and who also lacks the necesssary skills that holds less positive attitudes towards parents and parent involvement in education. These "young" teachers are often scared to death from all the horror stories they've heard about trying to conduct parent-teacher conferences. Teacher training often encourages unrealistics expectations; for example, I have yet to sit in on a training session for parent-teacher conferences in which the facilitator described anything but negative parent behavior. "How do you deal with the angry parent? How do you deal with the parents who are so ego-involved with their child, they can't see the truth about him?" Such

comments have always prompted me to ask, "How do you deal with a parent who comes in and is real happy and not hassled that day?

Another important element for success in parent-teacher relationships is teachers who view the parent as not having the sole responsibility for the achievement level of the child. One of the most interesting studies I reviewed was the study of almost 1,000 teachers in Dade County, Florida. The investigators found that the majority of teachers (even those who voiced approval of parent involvement) viewed most negatively parents of low achieving children. Those teachers tended to place the responsibility for the child's low achievement on the parents. Rather than to assume any of the responsibility themselves, the teachers felt it was the parents' fault. These teachers came from what they perceived to be inadequate facilities Perhaps to be a little sarcastic, if we can "beef-up" the schools and provide adequate funding and facilities, maybe we'll have teachers who feel more positive toward parents.

One of the other elements for success evident in the programs presented here is something we suspect to be true rather than something we "know" to be true in terms of research findings. That is, those teachers who relate to parents outside of the formal constraints of the teaching profession, who are humanistic, I guess you could say, and who see themselves as people first, are the ones who most likely have the greatest success in involving parents in home-school alliances.

Still another element facilitating successful home-school alliances is the ability of the school system to initate parent-to-parent networks. In this way, parents can view schools as being more responsive to their needs rather than the typical school which provides only school-to-home networks, often serving only the school's needs.

I believe the one thing I saw in the Peralta which is rare in most school school systems or in any of the other programs presented here, is teachers selecting that school. They actively sought employment in Peralta. This is terribly unique. Most teachers in Title I and in some of the other federally and state funded programs (i.e. vocational education), learn that parent involvement is mandated. When persons are mandated to do something, it can change the nature of how one feels about what you do. The uniqueness of the Peralta program is that issue of choice—the teachers choose Peralta knowing about the program in advance. Such choice creates a fundation for productive home-school alliances different from most programs.

That is all I wanted to say about what I see as factors facilitating successful home-school alliances. The obstacles to success relate more directly to system-wide issues. What we do with teachers is socialize them into isolation and into professional attitudes which undermine home-school relationships. We do this in teacher training in the various institutions of higher education. It happens everyday, all over the nation. We teach them to be "teachers" first and people last; we fail to encourage their humanness. In doing this, we mitigate against the kinds of potential alliances we so badly want and need to develop—alliances which will incidently, help pass school bond and tax levies. Teachers simply learn to be less human.

It is like the little child who sees the teachers in the grocery store and says somewhat susprised, "What are you doing here?" In our society, we sometimes forget teachers have to eat, too, and teachers have an existence beyond the classroom. Yet, the professional socialization of teachers encourages their isolation. We tend to acknowledge the problems of Native American whose teachers rarely live near the reservation schools. Yet I am amazed how many teachers in urban school, live in the suburbs. They never come to the neighborhoods except for their

six to eight-hour work day. It is very hard to relate to your consumers, children as well as parents, when you don't know what's going on in their lives, in their neighborhoods.

Although the polls seem to indicate that teachers want parent involvement. the data indicate teachers want parent held with the mundane aspects of education, like assisting with field trips or helping children with homework which they, as parents, may not understand. (How many adults learned "New Math"?) This serves as another obstacle to home-school alliances. Teachers tend to feel "Don't come into my classroom and mess things up. Don't try to tell me how to teach reading. After all, I spent five years learning how to do it."

Another obstacle to effective home-school interaction is the lack of required courses for pre-service and in-service training for teachers to learn how to work with parents in building home-school alliances. Could universities give up a methods course in reading or language arts to offer students a course in working effectively with parents? I believe such a lack in university curricula is indicative of the priorities in teacher education.

Another issue regarding teacher preparation is recruitment. That is, we recruit people to the teaching profession who may be sensitive to children but who may lack sensitivity to families. It is important we recruit people who parents and who have some sensitivity to the realities of parenthood. We need to provide experiences which sensitize teachers to children. Yet in teacher preparation we fail to cultivate both their continued sensitivity to developmental issues in children and the courage needed for parenting. When a teacher says, "I don't know how to talk to parents."

I often ask whether they are a parent themselves. Usually they answer yes. I use their own reality as a means for encouraging senstivity to parents in general by saying, "Well, how would you like to be talked to?" Cultivating such sensitivity is essential.

We know very little about the parent-teacher relationship in terms of any empirical data. We have a lot of suspicions about what will enhance the relationship, but we have very little concrete information about the qualities teacher need to have in order to encourage parent-teacher interaction. We also lack knowledge about those qualities teachers have which destroy parent-teacher alliances. Yet again, I firmly believe, it is the teacher who is the key--it is the teacher who makes that first contact with the home..it is the teacher who makes the first impression...it is the teacher who must try to link the home and school together more closely. If s/he doesn't do it adequately in the lower elementary grades, we will continue to have parents of fourth through ninth graders who don't want to be involved in the educational process.

Larry Cuban, Superintendent, Arlington County (Virginia) Public Schools

I'm going to talk about roles and parent involvement, but I want to create some categories. I want you to draw an imaginary line. At one end, put one parent role which is that of an "Audience." Dan Safran and a number of others have come up with these categories of parent involvement. "Audience" is a passive kind of thing, and a lot of our parents have other things on their mind; they pay taxes and they don't want to get involved in the schools. Next to that there is another role, "Home Tutor", a very common kind of role played by parents. Next to that would be "Program Supporter." This includes PTA, parents who would do anything including cleaning up, room mother; anything to help the program because they believe in it. Next to that would be parents as "Paid Staff." We've had lots of examples of that. It's very common to bring parents in to the schools on a paid relationship through these types of tasks. Next to that would be "Co-learner," where parents are brought to the schools to be involved in Parent education or parent effectiveness kinds of things. Another example is where some school systems would bring parents in on teacher in-service so that both teachers and parents are picking up information and skills about particular topics. Then next to "Co-learner" would be "Decision-Maker," and we've had examples of that. At the very end of the imaginary line would be "Advocate." The parents who advocate really wish, in this case, to decide upon certain things in the system.

What's stunning to me in this conference, (because I've been to a lot of these like yourselves), is that we didn't talk about empowerment, we didn't talk very much about advocacy, we didn't talk too much about decision-making, although I'll make some references to it. I guess that times have indeed changed.

If we had brought the same group together ten years ago, those who would have emphasized home tutors as parent involvement would have been hooted out

of this room. Those of you who are of my age group will say that's true, no question about it. I'm not judging , I'm making an observation. The only place where I see an emphasis on advocacy is in the federal programs. Ron Yoshida talked about the encouragement of advocacy for parents in this country under PL 94-142. There is no question in mind and I see it in my system daily.

Teacher Corp has built into it that ineffable friction that Teacher Corp is well noted for, where you pit one group of clients against another group of clients, teachers, parents and so on. But beyond that, advocacy and decision making by parents has simply passed out of style. It is indeed thirteen years since the Bundy Report in New York. Does it still exist in Washington where we've had community control in the Adams Morgan School in 1967-71 and we've had the Anacostia project? You can see similar efforts in New York and other major cities. I make this observation because there has been an obvious shift in time to those roles that now work collaboratively with the schools. I don't know all the reasons why, and I am sure there are multiple explanations but I did want to make that observation.

By and large, school professionals are schizophrenic on parent involvement. Again, keeping the " audience-to-advocacy" kind of continuum in your mind, when you talk with school professionals such as superintendents and principals and teachers, about parents as "audience", "home tutor," "program supporter," "co-learner," there is very little problem. Professionals are basically very supportive. But when you start to slip over into decision-making and advocacy, superintendents, school boards, principals and teachers get nervous. There is no question about that because conflict results from these parent involvement categories. Schools that are in a high conflict mode don't operate very well. It becomes very hard to get a job done because the energy flows to these situations where there is conflict. There is a kind of folk wisdom which says

that, in those school where there is a lot of conflict, it's hard for teachers and principals to focus on tasks. I think that wisdom is well founded, at least from my experience and from what I have observed. When you edge over into those other roles of decision-making and advocacy, you have to contend with school professionals who have relatively firm views on how far they can go. The other roles which are far more supportive of the school and where the conflict level is quite muted, school professionals will generally support.

The adversarial stances are going to be there because there are different interests. There's no question about it. For example I have a $50 million budget. We have 15,000 kids in our school system and it's shrinking all the time. When parents say to me they have a child with a learning disability, we may have to go through an elaborate process of hearings. Why? Because they may want a residential placement that may cost up to $20,000 a year, and our response may be to propose a day school placement in one of our programs which we think is the least restrictive environment for that youngster. We disagree and go to hearing and they call me insensitive. I may well be, I don't know. But I have to have a different perspective. That's what I'm paid to have. I have to make balanced judgements and that parent interests may be antithetical to the School Board's interest. It's inevitable, its built into the system. It's wise to keep that in mind, it's realistic. There are interests that are pitted against one another. Now that doesn't mean that it's hopeless; it just seems to me that it's a better part of wisdom to face that reality and face it openly, candidly and try to work with it.

I want to speak about the programs we heard from yesterday and categorize them according to that continuum I laid out for you.

The Peralta Program is unique, that's all I can say. It was pleasant and delightful to hear about it, but it's an anomaly in the world of schools. It's splendid to hear about the Peraltas of this country. We fortunately have one in our own school system with a similar history; the facts are slightly

different, the context is different, but the fact is that it was initiated by the parents, the basic motive being to save the school from closing. In the process, they hit upon a great idea: make a magnet school as a year round school; make it a system-wide alternative where teachers and parents can choose to go. It's a natural recip for a successful school if you have good parent and administrative leadership. Peralta is unique and it's a good example of decision making by parents, advocacy by parents, it's not the kind of thing that I think is replicable; rather its the kind of thing that comes together at particular points in time and particular places.

When you consider the Detroit program, the Miami program, the Arlington program, they are quite similar in terms of the roles that they have for parents to be involved. They are basically parent assistance programs aimed at tutoring, at trying to help the families as much as they can, But the focus is the kid. While this is appropriate, it nonetheless creates an emphasis on the child as the entry into the family where either the family serves as the tutor itself, brokers other tutorial arrangements, or something to that effect. Their object is to help the kid and to involve parents and members of the extended family to help the kid.

The San Antonio based Bilingual Training Institute for Parents is a throw-back to the earlier part of the last decade where its avowed purpose is indeed to enpower individuals who normally would not have the information or skills and then help them to be able to apply it. The presenter said that they are not at the application stage. I suspect, and Hope Leichter referred to this already, that when you get into the applications stage of the Bilingual Training Institute for Parents watch out for the termination of funding. Notice that it's not a local based project at all; its an area-wide program which works in a number of districts but it is not funded through a particular district. The aims of these program are quite similar. Three of them

are to remedy academic underachievement. It's interesting to note that except for Peralta, none of the initiatives came from parents. They all came from the institutions. All the programs are federally funded, except for Peralta, which received local start up funds, and Arlington. Arlington 's program is the only one that comes annually out of a local budget.

Among the problems that I would anticipate with these programs, the first is funding. I think Hope Leichter's point is absolutely essential and should be underscored. Those programs that are not locally funded will follow a very common pattern. The federal funds will dry up; they have termination dates of three to five years. At some point, the local system has to make a determination to let the program die or incorporate it.

I don't have to go over the grim history of what the past has shown us in that kind of pattern, With fiscal retrenchment, which is the pattern across the country, those locally funded programs that will go first will be staff development for teachers and parent assistance kinds of program. It's a common pattern when you have retrenchment because you are then reduced to the core, which is a teacher-and-kids kind of phenomenon. So funding is important and the first thing I ask when people prepare to scrap their programs, is "What is the main criterion for success for these parent assistance programs?"

Just as I'd be opposed to teachers being tenured or fired on the basis of their class scores, I would be equally opposed to a tutorial program increasing or decreasing funding because of the academic achievement scores of that year or a second year. The results of such a program are just too subtle and many of our research designs are not capable of picking up causal variables other than through a longitudinal kind of design, over a long period of time. Therefore, I suggest that the values of these program are different. They can be measured in terms of achievement test scores but I think that it's a trap. Even if a funding agency says you have to do it, I would argue against it strenuously. It's almost like putting the first nail in the coffin of that program and it encourages people to play games with test scores.

REPORTS OF SMALL GROUP DISCUSSIONS: RESOURCES AND ISSUES FOR BUILDING LOCAL HOME-SCHOOL ALLIANCES

Dan Safran, Conference Chair

In order to generate a deeper level of discussion, we have divided conference participants into five small groups which parallel the perspectives represented by the panel we have just heard: parent-home-community; adolescent; teacher; school organization. We have distributed all of you in as heterogenous manner as possible so that each samll group contains member whose localities, programs, and interests differ.

The task of the small groups is to consider the following questions;

(1) What are the strengths and capabilities which parents and schools already have?

(2) What resources*are needed by the various actors engaged in creating and in sustaining home-school alliances for grades 4-9?

(3) What activities or ideas seem to work in building home-school alliances?

(4) What kinds of information do we still need to increase our understanding of the process of creating and sustaining home-school alliances for these grade levels?

*As noted in the conference agenda resources might include:

a) Program aids such as materials, training and technical assistance, special staff positions, and

b) social supports form school staff for the program and for parent involvement.

Parent-Home Community Perspectives on Home-School Alliances

Facilitator: Marie Elena Betancourt, Bilingual Training Institute for Parents,

As our group began, we found there were a lot of things we wanted to share and find out. Basically, what we tried to do was to identify information that we felt should be given to program developers and administrators to create home-school alliances.

One of the things we came up with was the need to obtain information. We need to have access to what is happening in the different areas, we need to come up with "living archives," as Hope Leichter so nicely put it. We need to have an entity like NIE or a National Clearinghouse to collect and disseminate data to everybody attempting to put a home-school alliance program together. This information does not need to be very structured or very concise, but rather something that is very general. We need practical case material like program summaries or vignettes. For example, some of the things that kept a program from being more effective, some of the factors that insured success of a program, or just some impressions or observation of a program. We felt that program information should be centrally located and accessible to everybody.

Our group was looking at it from the parent perspective and one of the needs we identified is to inform the people working in home-school alliance programs of the importance of clarifying parent roles. For example, when we are talking about parents as teachers, are we really saying that parents will be the teachers? We discussed parents as teachers both in a formal and in an everyday sense of the word. For example, "formal" means the things the parents can do with the children in the school context like tutoring, helping with homework, spelling, and just helping students set their goals. The "everyday" process includes language development, parents' helping kids by letting them help them sort out things, in counting and classifying.

One of the other issues that we discussed was dealing with conflict avoidance. We didn't get very far with this issue, but we felt that it is something that we need to be aware of. For example, there are a lot of times when we, as parents, don't know how to cope with our children in terms of "what should I tell them?" "What should I provide that is interesting for them to do?", or "Should I allow them to watch television?" We often don't know how to say no. We tend to avoid any kind of conflict, not only in the home, but also at the school house.

I think that the most important thing that came out of our session was the need to pull together information on program development and experience. There are a lot of good things going on out there and we need to find a way to get all that information together and to the people involved in those programs.

Parent-Home-Community Perspectives on Home-School Alliances

Facilitator: Theodora Ooms, Family Impact Seminar, Washington, DC.

Our group was composed of seven people, all of whom were parents and several were involved in some of the programs we've heard about during the past two days. We discussed the questions we were given from the perspective of parents. I've tried to impose a particular organization on a lot of the rich ideas that went back and forth, and I hope I haven't put too much of myself into this report. As one way of evaluating the factors in successful parent involvement programs we started by reviewing some of the factors critical to parents' feeling good about a school. We then moved to discuss various programs starting with those at the earlier grades and going on to programs for 10-15 year olds.

There was a little bit of skepticism or should I say, worry about there being too much emphasis on "programs." In response to the issues that were raised this morning, perhaps our programs have become too dependent on monies that may not always be there, and on leadership qualities that are not always permanent. I felt that it was interesting to note that many of the factors about programs that we thought were successful could be, or had already been, incorporated as policies, even district-wide policies in some places. Therefore, a role for programs may be to model what can be developed or shown as successful in order to be incorporated more widely across the education system.

What do parents need? We talked about the importance of familiarity, information and access to schools. There are some very nice examples of how parents can be encouraged at the start of the school year. One proposal was to set aside a whole week when the schools are open to parents to come in and find out about the school. Parents come in with their children talk with the teacher, and help set up the school. Such a program certainly helps parents feel involved in the very first moment of the school year. In San Antonio, the schools are open to parents any time of the day; they can just walk in, no appointments or anything.

Another important factor we discussed was the school's philosophy about parents. We wondered how many principals and districts ever clearly spelled this out. Yet it's very helpful for parents to know from the teachers what their philosophy is and how they suggest parents communicate with them. We can't expect all teachers to give parents their home phone numbers; yet some teachers may say, "Well, if you drop me a note, I will call you if you give me your number." Some school districts have encouraged frequent communications and others have not.

There seems to be a confusion of roles as you try to develop the parent involvement parts of early childhood programs and shift them over to ages 10 to 14. We agreed with the things Joan Lipsitz has talked about, namely that adolescence and pre-adolescence is a time of "moving away." We also discussed the confusion parents feel when they are expected by teachers to teach at home and how difficult this is when many parents are working.

We discussed other examples of helping parents understand the schools. In terms of communication, we talked about conferences, making sure that conferences can be held at all different hours of the day. Many of the good programs seem to have that as one of their characteristics. Effective communication can be encouraged by policies, either by the principal, the district or sometimes the state. This can include all kinds of communications with the teacher: phone messages, notes home, etc.

We talked about the importance of teachers sending positive messages home. In Chicago, they have an approach called, "Happygrams". There is a whole range of "happygrams" sent through the mail to parents to tell them about important,

We discussed some of the barriers to parent-teacher conferences and communication: how parents are made to feel "dumb" by many teachers; how confusing it is to be told about the technical aspects of programs like math when you yourself lack the knowledge expected of your children; how difficult it may be for parents to perform some of the roles that programs develop for supporting the school learning activity.

We dicsussed how some programs have suggested other roles for parents. This seems to be particularly important with pre-teens. One program is PUSH/Excell which emphasizes how to help parents set up structures at home so that youngsters can do their homework. Parents do not have to work with their children any particular new way but just help them have a quiet place to work.

Another suggestion was that parents of this age group may relate to the school best on extra-curricular activities such as sports and hobbies. We seldom hear about extra-curricular activities, yet that is how you can get parents interested in very positive and pleasurable ways where they feel competent rather than "one down" with the teacher. Interestingly enough, in the junior high school, it seems to be the sports coach or the music teacher that the parents get to know.

Another barrier is the structure of these early adolescent serving schools. They are difficult for parents to relate to; parents don't know who their contact is for appointments or who can serve as their key liaison. There are no room mothers; there's no single classroom teacher; the principal is just somewhere "up there," the assistant principals all seem to work on discipline problems. It's very difficult, and we need to do a lot more work on who can be that link between home and school. Given the pressures on counselors, it is certainly not realistic to expect most of them to be the link although that tends to be where you go if you have a problem.

Parents are not going to be as closely involved as they may have been with their younger age children partly because adolescents may say, "Stay out, mom or dad," and partly because the middle and secondary school is a more complex organization. It is important to have alternative avenues of communications and to use the media in a variety of innovative ways. Don't just send newsletters home to the parents, but flood the media with what's going on in the school, what special programs are happening, and what special activities parents could get involved in.

To sum up, we feel that in order to improve home-school alliances, priority needs to be given to increasing parent-school communication. There are a great number of ways in which we do know how to do this, yet we must identify many more positive ways of encouraging this alliance.

Perspectives of Adolescents on Home-School Alliances

Facilitator: Naomi Lowinsky, Marriage, Family and Child Counselor, Oakland, CA.

Our group agreed with Joan Lipsitz that the Conference has not had enough of the presence of the early adolescent. What I want to do is talk to you as though I am an early adolescent, telling you what my needs and concerns are.

One of the things that I need is to feel special, but not different. By that I mean I don't want to be pointed out as being different from everybody, but I want to feel special in the attention I get from teachers, from peers, from parents.

I want to feel competent; I want to feel like I can master things. I want to feel good at things and, if I'm not feeling good at things, I would like help, but in a way that respects my need not to feel too different, and my need to feel competent.

I want to feel who I am as a person; I want to feel my identity as who I am as a person and as who I am in relation to my racial and cultural group. But, again, not to make me too different, just to have me connected to who I really am, to what my roots are.

I want to be able to be responsible and committed. I'm not who a lot of people think I am, though sometimes I may act that way. I may not want to take the trash out but I really do want to do important things: I want to take care of children; I want to hold jobs; I want to feel that I can move out to the community and get responsible positions.

I want not to be categorized only in terms of my chronological age because I'm going through a lot of different changes. In some ways I may be 13, in other ways I may feel like 2 and in other ways I may be acting like I'm 20. If I get trapped in some sort of stereotype like "Well, you're 13, that's the way you're supposed to act," I'm going to resent it. I want to be allowed to become. I want a sense of affirmation of my changing self, and I don't want to be trapped or categorized in one part of myself. If I'm a girl, and I'm beginning to develop, I don't want to be trapped in that recognition. I want the other parts of myself to get affirmation, too.

I want to learn to be autonomous and separate from my parents, but I also very much need centrally important adults in my life. People who are role models, people that I can learn from, people that I can look up to. Sometimes these will be my parents and a lot of times they won't. That doesn't mean that my parents aren't good parents and that I don't love them. It just means that I'm also needing some other input.

I need a lot of information about the growth and physical changes that I'm going through. I need to know these things, but I need to know them in ways that respect me rather than in ways that treat me like I don't know and like I'm not competent. I really am open to a lot of different kinds of experiences in the community, at school and in the home. But I'm not ready to take on

long term commitments. They need to be short-lived experiences, for the most part.

I need a lot of structure in values, but I'm also going to push up against them. That doesn't mean that I don't like it when my parents say, "Be home at such and such time." I'll argue against it and give them a hard time about telling me what time to be home. But if they suddenly stopped telling me that, I'd be scared.

I need to be known. I need not to be in a situation where I'm absolutely lost among masses of people. It would help me to have smaller schools. It would help me to have smaller classrooms. It would help me to have a number of people in a classroom who would know me and be able to interrelate with me. It's really hard to move out of an elementary school situation in which I probably have been known and where I've had the same teacher all day long, into a situation where I'm just one of masses. I don't want to be just another one.

I'm concerned about a lot of things. If I'm a boy I'm concerned about whether I'm going to be seen as being macho. If I'm going to be asked to do things like learning how to read and if I don't really know how to read in ways that respect my masculinity, I'm really going to have a hard time with that. I want respect for whom I'm becoming as a man. If I'm a young woman, I don't want to feel like I'm doing things that would make people see me as not being feminine enough.

I want to be able to be careful about the roles that I play and yet I want to be challenged. I need understanding for the fact that my peers are looking at me, competing with me and playing with me according to how they see me in terms of my sexual development, my sex roles.

I think a lot about my family and I'm real concerned about my family. I want to know how my family fits into the larger picture. Are we rich? Are we poor? Are we different? If I'm from a single parent family, how do other people see single parent families? How's mother doing, if mother is a single parent and I'm living with mother? I don't want to take care of mother but I am worried about her and I want to know that she is doing okay.

I'm very aware of television. I will be aware that, if I live with my father in a single parent family, I probably haven't seen a television program that relates to my reality. If I live with my single parent mother, I'm probably going to be glad about "One Day At A Time," which is about a single mother and her kids. If I live in a stepfamily, I may (as one of our kids did) think twice about the authenticity of "The Brady Bunch."

I'm concerned about cultural integrity. I want to feel proud of who I am in my cluture. I may get into hassles with people from other cultures. I want to be respected for who I am in my culture. I want to be able to respect other people but I may do some hasseling about it. I may do some pushing

up against it and that needs to be supported and not seen as racism. It needs to be seen as really exploring, finding out and experimenting.

I'm concerned about how I'm going to fit into the future, who I'm going to be, and what the future holds for me. If I'm a kid growing up now I may be worried about whether I'm ever going to be able to own a house or a car, whether inflation is totally going to wipe out my sense of the future. I'm worried about whether I'm going to have a job and what to do in the real world in terms of getting jobs.

We decided that the programs that "worked" were ones which had awareness and training about adolescent development and met the needs of the early adolescent expressed above. What also seemed to work and was very striking about all of the programs was that they met people where they were. This was true in terms of the cultural integrity of the communities being served.

We noticed that what seemed to work very well were programs occurring away from the school. They seemed to meet the kids' needs for autonomy, both from the school and from parents. When churches and recreation centers and other appropriate places were being used, there seemed to be more flexibility in the way the programs were being conceptualized.

We observed that programs were successful when they were flexible in terms of time, location and their real ability to respond to family stresses such as unemployment, not enough clothes, or whatever the family was struggling with.

One effective approach with early adolescents not mentioned in the programs is peer tutoring. Our group wanted to put that in.

What are the obstacles? Some of them have to do with our mind-set. One is that we tend not to see programs for early adolescents as intervention or prevention. We either tend to focus on early childhood as the time to deal with development or we think that we have to deal with early adolescents to prevent them from dropping out of high school. Unfortunately, we don't see this age group as having its own needs for a preventive kind of intervention. There is a lack of community awareness of the needs of this age group. This is a result of the myths about adolescence, adult ambivalence and the feeling of inadequacy that adults have about this age group. Also, parents tend not to be very available for their adolescent children.

Another obstacle is the narrow focus on measurable school achievement restricting the capability of programs to be creative and inventive. A big obstacle is the lack of training for the special needs of this age group. The teachers are not trained to understand the developmental needs of early adolescents. They are trained to teach English or Math, they are not trained to know what adolescence is all about.

The kids are the best resources: their needs, their idols, their interests and their energies: they're great and we need to ask them for help. Families have great capabilities and so do the schools. In fact, our group thinks declining enrollment is wonderful. It's a wonderful opportunity to use the schools in a more positive way and to have more space in it for the kids to be known.

Facilitator: Joyce Epstein, Center for Social Organization of Schools, Johns Hopkins University

The summaries of the last two discussion groups were encouraging because both mention the potential importance of teacher-training for better parent-involvement programs.

Our group discussed teachers' perspectives on parent involvement—what it means for the teacher, and what it means to the teacher. The group considered several topics including the organizational level at which home-school alliances are supported, the need for new kinds of pre-service and in-service teacher training, the difficulties and dilemmas teachers face in instituting home-school alliances, and the change in teachers' roles when they do involve parents in learning activities in the classroom, the school, or at home.

The success of home-school alliances may depend on the organizational level at which they are implemented and encouraged. Family-school programs may be implemented by the teacher at the classroom level, by the principal at the school level, or by the district, as a program across schools. Support and encouragement for teachers' efforts may be personal and informal (based on the initiative, commitment, skills and degree of security of classroom teachers), or may be public and formal (based on the recognition of teachers' efforts by the school and district administrators). For example, a principal could offer active support for parent-teacher activities by encouraging or requiring conferences, home visits, or providing release time for teachers to meet with parents. A principal could offer passive support by permitting teachers to conduct their own programs without interference. District support could be active if para-professional staff members are hired to assist teachers in parent-school programs or if in-service training is provided for teachers for parent-school programs.

"You will have parent conferences once a term and I will arrange for school time for these conferences." Or a principal might provide released time for teachers to make home visits once a year. Passive support would mean that the principal would not interfere with teachers who designed techniques to involve parents in learning activities at home or in the classroom.

At the district level, the Detroit para-professional program is an example of how support systems affect classroom teachers' activities. Virginia High described how teachers became committed to the notion of parent involvement for the entire class, even when only some of their children were initially involved in a special program. The "target group" of children sparked the interest of the teacher to work with the parents of all children. In this way district-level support for teacher-parent involvement encouraged classroom level activities.

The possibilities for active support by administrators at the junior high school level have not been explored. We don't know what a principal could do to assist teachers with home-school alliances. There should be ways to test different active administrative supports to assist teachers in parent-involvement at the middle school and junior high school levels. Indeed we have very few ideas about how teachers, parents and students can work together on learning activities after the elementary school years.

The group discussed the need to revolutionize teacher training. Nothing short of that description fits the required revisions in the roles and expectations of teachers. Teachers are not trained, either in pre-service or in-service programs, to work with parents to improve the education of the children. Indeed, parents are often introduced as "the enemy" or the disruptors of teachers' practices. Or, the teachers blame the parents for the poor learning

of students, while the parents blame the teacher for the same students' failures. The courses that teachers take in training do not emphasize methods or examples of parent involvement and home-school cooperative efforts. It was noted, moreover, that teachers are not prepared for the cultural differences that exist in the classrooms that many new teachers enter. Since teachers are not trained to think in terms of differences among families, assistance from families, or extending learning time in home activities, it becomes a great effort for any teacher to create parent-involvement programs.

Even if teachers were better trained, there could be tension between newly-trained teachers and veteran teachers who may be skeptical or opposed to parent involvement because of their own earlier attempts to involve parents, or because of their own education that emphasized the separate worlds of parents and teachers. The new teachers would either become part of the established system of separate home and school environments or suffer extreme stress. It was pointed out by one of our group members that teachers with new ideas must work toward change within the system, or they will meet with failure. One way to overcome this problem is with well-constructed in-service programs in the potentials of different parent-involvement techniques so that new and experienced teachers could begin to select and test techniques in their own schools and classrooms.

The group also discussed some of the dilemmas of parent involvement. For example, many teachers wear a "mask of professionalism" to make a distinction between the teacher and the parent. The new teacher training programs must remove the need for a mask by providing teachers with a more comprehensive view of the teacher's role as manager of learning activities, including the

management of parental assistance. Teachers need to understand how they can direct the learning of the students in their classrooms. If they choose, teachers can share decisions and activities with parents (and with students) in numerous ways, as we have heard in the last two days. In order to decide how to manage the learning activities they design for their students, teachers must think in terms of the organization of the classroom. By sharing decisions and control with parents and students, teachers do not necessarily lose power. They actually may gain power from the efforts of the additional people who participate in decisions about learning. The role of the teacher as the distributor and manager of authority in the classroom is not well-understood by teachers and is not used to engage parents in conducting or reinforcing students' learning.

There are many unanswered questions about parent involvement at the junior high school level, about how teachers and parents can learn to use different techniques to the advantage of the child. Some teachers may not want parents in the class; some parents may not feel comfortable in the classroom or school. But it may be that many more parents can become involved in their children's learning activities at home by the ways teachers design and assign those activities.

The group discussion suggests that there are ways of creating different kinds of home-school alliances to maximize teachers' and parents' interests in the children. At any grade level, the teachers' perspectives and skills will be crucial for the success of home-school alliances.

Schools Perspectives on Home-School Alliances

Facilitator: Stephen Rollin, Florida State University

I would like to address some of the areas that were not discussed by my colleagues and in the reports from the other groups, and speak to some issues that we looked at in relation to the organization of the schools. One thing that may be important as the point of departure is that we were the only group not interested in looking at individuals. The other four groups were looking at people. We were particularly interested in looking at institutions - schools in the community.

One of the things that emerged in our discussion was the need to look at the school as an inter-relationship among three groups - the professional educator (which includes counselors, administrators and school teachers); the kids (as participants in all this); and, of course, the parents as participants. As we look at these three groups and how they participate, we are looking at three over-laying kinds of groups. One of the basic questions from the schools' perspective is what responsibilities are unique to me as an educator, what responsibilities are unique to me as a student, what responsibilities are unique to me as a parent. Once we can identify what these unique areas are, we can then begin to talk about those areas that we hold in common and those areas that we might be willing to share.

Part of the tension seems to be in deciding who gets what piece of the action. A key question appears to be: How can you talk about what is happening and what is not happening in school without indicting one group or the other for failing? Part of the tension in establishing a home-school alliance is that the alliance may create within the system a built-in process for blaming one set of actors or the other. How do we attempt to deal in a positive, productive way with the issues of tension and cooperation that may exist within the physical setting of the school itself.

Our group came up with some answers but, as a matter of fact, the answers raised more questions than before. We began to look at the differences among the school-parent alliances represented by the local program presentations. The Oakland program was grass roots and our feeling was that this was the best kind of alliance.

There was a need within the community and the school was willing and able and intelligent enough to be able to see the need and develop the right kind of alliance. There is a better chance that this type of alliance will persist over time as compared with those alliances required by and supported for a very short time by federal monies.

We raised questions about the levels of agreement, the differences among parents, among educators, and among kids. We want to understand how we can develop alliances at the grass roots yet be consistent with federal, state, local, cultural requirements. Can we come up with alliances that make some sense, a mutuality?

We discussed the fact that education is something that occurs outside of the school as well as in the school, and that the school counts for but one part of a child's educational experience. There are other variables such as the ones described in the Detroit program. For example, we haven't talked much about the media. The media is certainly a very important influence on the way kids learn, how they develop values. What's "cool" and what's "not cool" is more often something that's prescribed on television or on rock and roll radio stations, or reviewed in comic books, or seen in Seventeen Magazine, than it is in family discussions over breakfast or in classroom debates during the course of the day.

How does one try to integrate the entire world within the world of school or the world of family? How do you build such variables into alliances?

Another issue that relates to all this may be described as the developmental maturity of the school. There are some schools that are immature in terms of their willingness to provide educational experiences and make alliances. They are really dealing with the very basic issues of survival. On the other hand, there are schools that may be considerably more mature, where the goals and values of the community are much more easily reflected within the school. In some cases, it may be expected that every child would go to Harvard; in other cases the notion may be that every child ought to learn basic survival skills like ways of eating.

What kinds of alliances might grow in a survival-oriented school as opposed to a school where the concept of success is getting into Harvard? We may be talking about very different kinds of alliances. We need to recognize the variability of parent readiness. How much can parents within different settings contribute to an alliance and how much can a school expect parents to contribute?

These are complex questions because we are dealing with a very heterogeneous community. We need to be very suspect about general solutions to very particular problems.

I want to end with the suggestion that what we may need is a mediator. Such an individual would "shuttle" between the community and the schools, find out the needs and resources in the community, convey the kinds of needs that the schools have, convey the needs of parents in the community, and help to build an alliance. We took the word alliance from a socio-political point of view as much as we did from an educational point of view, not forgetting that in this troika - this alliance - we absolutely need to focus on helping the child. In fact, we would have absolutely nothing to talk about if we were talking about school-parent alliances without children.

DIRECTIONS FOR THE FUTURE: WHAT CAN AND SHOULD WE DO TO DEVELOP LOCAL HOME-SCHOOL ALLIANCES TO PROMOTE STUDENT LEARNING ?

Dan Safran , Conference Chair

The members of this final panel are here to represent a number of national perspectives on home-school alliances in the upper elementary and junior high years. The panel members have been asked to broaden our concerns by examining home-school alliances in the context of some of the larger issues in American society.

Our panelists are: (1) Michael Bakalis, Deputy Undersecretary,Department of Education; (2) Chris Pipho, Education Commission of the States; (3) Priscilla Hilliard, Deputy Director, White House Conference on Families; (4) Virginia Sparling, President, National Parent-Teacher Association; (5) Pat Weiler, American Federation of Teachers; and (6) Cesar Ramirez, Associate Director, Advocates for Children.

Michael Bakalis, Deputy Undersecretary, Department of Education

In many ways the problems you have been talking about are the result of some enormous and phenomenal successes of the American educational system. As you know, we are a nation which has succeeded in schooling more people than any other country in the history of the planet.

That kind of success, and I would suggest to you that it is a success, raises two kindsof strange and maybe contradictory things that have happened to the nation. On the one hand we have a nation of people who are more educated than ever before in greater numbers than ever before, and by the very fact of that education our population now really questions the ability of so-called educational leaders to lead and to know anything.

Richard Reeves, in a recent article in Esquire Magazine, called "The Quagmire of Leadership," said that America has gone through three stages of leadership. One is back in the time of Jefferson and Madison when we had leaders occupying one place in the public mind, and followers in quite another. We clearly understood that. We were not Jeffersons, we were not Madisons. They were there and we were here. Sometime later, that changed and our leaders and followers seemed closer together. Today, in the third stage, the followers are perceived to be out in front of the leaders and the followers, in fact, believe they know more than the leaders.

So our population looks at every institution from the presidency down and says "Jimmy Carter, what does he know? He doen't know anything." "Ronald Reagan's no good." "Anderson stinks." "This guy's no

good." "The superintendent's incompetent." "The college president

doesn't know what he is doing." "Everybody is incompetent." "No one knows what they are doing." All of us know better than anybody else how to run the show.

So it is an interesting result that perhaps the more educated the population, the more apt we are to reject leadership in that population because we all think we know the answers to everything anyhow.

At the same time that's going on, we are seeing something else. It is ironic, of course, that as we have educated more people than any other country in the history of the planet, we also have said to that educated population that we don't think they've got much to contribute to the education of those who come after them. We don't do anything in a concrete way to involve the most educated people in educating the young who are following. The educators who are in leadership positions very often consciously and unconsciously set up barriers to keep the larger educated population out of the process of educating the young.

Those are some things that have happened in the country which we ought to keep in mind as we address ourselves to building some of these home-school alliances that you have been talking about. In many ways, we need them more than ever before.

I need not tell anybody here that confidence in this educational system is not high. It is not high by any poll that you can look at. Part of that lack of confidence is because we are spoiled by having so many successes; we want more. But there is genuine dissatisfaction with what's going on in the schools. At this time of low confidence in the schools, they certainly could use help. They could use the help of a lot of people in whatever they want to do, because the schools can't do the job themselves, and they can't afford to do the job themselves even if they want to. Of course, it's becoming very clear, as it should have been long ago, that education takes place in a variety of locations and the

school is only one small part of where a youngster's education takes place. If we are not going to talk about home-school alliances but home education alliances, that's really a more apt kind of approach because education is not only taking place in schools; nor could it.

The larger question is: how then can the home participate in the process of education, whether it happens to be in the school or whether it happens to be outside the school? The key question is not what can you do with the school, but what can be done in educating the young.

I suggest to you that very little is going to be done unless parents or families (as we have just talked about in a larger sense) understand that they need to have access to the decision-making process. If they don't have access to the decision making process, the tendency will be to see parents as a pain-in-the-neck to have around since it is a lot easier to run the school on the basis of the organization that exist and not really include people.

Access to the decision-making process is extremely important. This gets us to a quasi-political, or maybe fully political, kind of question. It's an important one because educational decisions today are, in my opinion, clearly in the political arena and anybody who thinks not is just naive about what actually happens in the schools. How do you get access so that you can begin to form these kinds of alliances?

One way is by having access to people in positions of authority; maybe a state superintendent of schools, local superintendent, a board member, a secretary of education for the United States. Whatever level it happens to be, I suggest that they press for certain kinds of involvement.

One of my past positions was as State Superintendent of Education for the State of Illinois. In that capacity I was kind of proud of some

of the things we did to open up the educational process and involve people in decision-making so that they could form alliances .

Without going into detail I want to list some of the things we did. We had hearings all over the state of Illinois involving over 6,000 people on setting goals and directions for the schools themselves. It doesn't do much good to say you really want to help education if you don't know what you want to educate for. The first question is, "What are the schools for? That kind of process involved five or six thousand people in a state-wide effort. As a result of those hearings we had a state-wide conference of another 5,000 people who came to discuss a written agenda for what the schools of the state should be doing. Two volumes came out of that. They were very specific, not like the general things you usually get. What was produced was a detailed statement of the very specific kinds of programs to be achieved by a specific date. Parents were involved throughout this effort.

Through an Executive Order of my office, every school district in the state was required to submit a program plan. The program plan consisted of the districts' answering four questions: Where are we in education right now? Where do we want to go? How do we know we have gotten there? and What do we want to do after that? The program planning required and mandated that parents had to participate or the plan was not acceptable to the State Department of Eduation.

I had set up ten advisory councils across the state made up of parents.

I met with these personally on a rotating basis. One thing we did on a regular basis (you are going to think this sounds crazy, and it was I guess) was to set up 10,000 coffees in the State of Illinois. I didn't attend all of them (obviously my kidneys would have given out), but 10,000 coffees were set up in homes with a very structured approach

and agenda and involving and average of twenty or thirty people at each coffee. This contributed to widespread participation in having access to the decision making process.

This is not always going to happen voluntarily on the part of state officials, local officials or federal officials. But there are ways and there can be pressure points exerted so that access can be had. Then you can begin discussing how to build alliances. Pressure is likely to be used when we have parents who understand the value of well organized advocacy. We live in a society of organized advocacy whether we like it or not (and I don't always like it) but that's the way things happen.

Let me just say in conclusion that, if we are going to talk about home-school alliances then the questions which need to be in the minds of any parent or family group are: What do I really want to do? What is the purpose of education? What can I do? and What should I really be doing.

Speaking for myself and not the Department of Education my personal evaluation is that no school program is worth a darn if it doesn't do at least two things: teach kids basic skills so that they can continue to learn for the rest of their lives; and develop in youngsters a sense of self worth. If a program doesn't do these two things, I would scrap it.

I'd never have any problem if I were a school board member and I was told that we didn't have any money to do all these things. I'd day, so what. If you have to get rid of driver's training, then get rid of it. The key issue is what do you want to do with the school? It's important that, when you are asking yourselves how can you build those alliances, you ask the fundamental question of what we want to do once we get access. Do we, for example, want to relieve the school of the burden of teaching drivers education, sex education, morals education, values education? Do you want to help do that? If so, more power to

you because, as you well know, the schools have become the receptacle of trying to solve every societal burden. It is important for parents to understand that if the school is to do all of these things then the alliances ought to be built on all of these areas as well.

This new Department of Education has two areas that I think are going to be important for involving parents and families in education. One will soon be announced, a section of the Office of Public Participation which, while brand new and not fully conceptualized, will have as its basic charge the formulation of strategies for public participation of non-educators in the educational process.

Secondly, the Intergovernmental Advisory Council on Education, created by the Congress, has twenty members of various categories. While we have parental membership on the council, we do not have representatives of parent organizations. This was a slip and needs to be corrected over the next year with additional appointments. These two avenues hold promise for doing the kinds of things discussed at this Conference.

Priscilla Hilliard, Deputy Director for Issues, White House Conference on Families

In the closing part of the last session, we listened to comments about the need to look at the developmental stages of children and youth before building programs. It was pointed out that we may have to sensitize parents to what the particular signals are for particular age groups. I smiled to myself because that's the sort of role I would like to play on the panel today.

I've just come from a conference where parents took the opposite position. They feel (and these were delegates to the White House Conference on Families) that they know the developmental stages better than the educators and researchers, and that parents must sensitize the educators to the developmental stages of their children.

The White House Conference on Families was an attempt to call together family members from all over the country to examine the ways public and private institutional policies impact on families, and to make our agencies, both public and private, more sensitive in their dealings with families.

I want to share with you some of the recommendations and concerns of conference delegates. I would then like to talk about the limitations and constraints on implementing the recommendations and our implementation strategies.

There were three White House Conferences held in June and July, and the major recommendations or the main thrust of the discussions had a lot to do with the changing image of American families. This is very pertinent to our discussion today in that one of the things many groups wanted to start with was a definition of families. That was not done in a direct way in all three conferences. However, the changes that families have undergone were highlighted and underscored.

In our discussion of home-school alliances, one needs to look at what today's home looks like. How does it differ from the home of say ten, twelve, twenty years ago? How should that impact on our strategies as we begin to develop programs?

I want to mention a couple of changes in today's families. One of the things that stands out is that families or couples are beginning to have their children later. As a result, the parents are generally older at the time of the first child,and by the time child is in the fourth grade, the parents are in the mid 30's; by the time the child reaches adolescence, the parent would be on into the 40's. Therefore, we are dealing with a parent who is older and much more sophisticated in regard to parent-child relationships, as well as relationships with the school and society in general.

Other changes include an increase in single-parent families, a large increase in the elderly, and more informal male-female liaisons. Consequently, the concept of family has to be changed from two or more people connected by blood or marriage to a much broader definition which includes other kinds of families developed on a more informal basis.

Another important issue involves the different concepts of family held by the sub-cultural groups represented in our schools. For example, with Black families, one sees the importance of the extended family. In addition, there is the concept of "fictive kin" where those who are not related by blood have been adopted into the family. They may be family friends who also perform the functions of a family member in terms of giving services to the family and feeling like "family." This is a practice common in other minority groups as well.

All of this must be taken into consideration as we consider developing programs for home-school alliances.

One of the recommendations which came out of the Los Angeles White House conference spoke directly to home-school alliances. It called for a partnership between parents and school personnel to ensure quality education for each student and recommended that schools, religious institutions and the media cooperate with parents to strengthen education. It urged that families be involved in a meaningful way in the education of children and recommended parent involvement in the development of all educational policies at the federal, state and local level including the establishment of community advisory councils at each school.

I want to share with you the philosophy that became the foundation of the recommendations.

First, education is not the responsibility of schools alone; families must be involved in meaningful ways.

As I listened to speakers talk about the various models of parent involvement programs across the country, and as I thought about the Hearings that we had in seven states, and the discussion of the delegates, it occurred to me that very few parents know about the programs being discussed at this conference. You are referring to these as if they are disseminated widely and people know about them. Given my experience with the White House Conference on Families, I maintain that most parents do not know that there exist programs which call for their involvement in more meaningful ways in schools.

I may be wrong, and as researchers you would know, but this might have a lot to do with the fact that these programs are usually appendages to programs designed for the poorer segments of this society. The programs are directed toward those who are not the affluent, who are not "functioning families" and therefore these programs are not institutionalized and are not widely disseminated.

That brings up the question of whether or not we are really commited to a concept of home-school alliances, or is that something we look at when there is a problem with the educational development of the child of the upwardly mobile family.

The delegates to the White House Conference recognized that there are other institutions involved in the education of our children, and schools should not operate in isolation from all of these other institutions but there should be coordination of our efforts.

The concept of family must be broadened. Most of the time, when I've heard you talking about parent involvement or home-school alliances, you talked about the parent; you didn't talk about the aunts or uncles or the siblings. Thinking of my own experience in school, there was a kind of bias if your mother or father were not able to come to school, but another family member did. Although not stated, this bias was communicated quite well. We have to change our concept of family so that it embraces other family members besides the parents.

We had very little money for implementation, but unlike other White House Conferences, we were to have an implementation advocacy period.

We see ourselves doing four things. (1) Communicating the results of the recommendations to decision-makers and to the general public. (2) Convening key constituencies to inform and involve them in conference implementation activities. Part of this effort will be a set of briefings with the 100 major corporations in the country in order to get them to move on family-oriented personnel policies which were among the top recommendations of the conference. (3) Advocating specific recommendations in legislative or other decision-making forums. (4) Linking our efforts to on-going activities inside and outside of government. This last implementation area speaks to the need for researchers, professional

organizations, and organizations like the PTA getting together and beginning to talk about what is reasonable in expanding and institutionalizing home-school alliances.

The family setting is the first school a child attends and families are the primary educators. As we strengthen home-school alliances we will advance the educational progress of our youth.

Chris Pipho, Education Commission of the States

I would modify the question the panel was asked to deal with, and add one slight item to it. Instead of taking a look at "what we can or should do," I would add something called "what might happen no matter what we do." When you look at the governance of education you see that it is really lodged fairly firmly at the state level in the United States Constitution, and in the constitutions and laws surrounding education in the 50 states.

The Education Commission of the States is something that has to be described because many people would like to place us with AFT, NEA, the PTA or other groups. But technically, we are an inter-state compact agency. This means that our agency works with forty-eight member states and three territories. This working arrangement has been put into being by laws passed at the state level. In other words, every member state has passed a law saying that they wanted to join together with the other states to exchange information and create a neutral dialogue area in education and politics. We are sort of a legal extension of each of our member states. In order to understand our governing structure, let me give you this very brief overview. Seven people are appointed to our board of directors from each member state. Its always the Governor, always the chairs of the education committees of the two state legislative houses (except in Nebraska where there is only a single house) and four other people appointed by the governor.

Now, while it maybe very easy for people to exchange ideas and information across State lines informally as we have done here, to do so formally is much more difficult. Our arrangement is one where we provide a neutral dialogue area for states to work together. Our goal

and thrust is to exchange information and to help the states at the state policy level. My speciality at the Commission is working on state legislation.

Since 1972, four of us have summarized (or used someone else's summary for) about 10,000 pieces of state legislation a year. I do a newsletter weekly that looks at trends and issues in state legislation. This whole issue of parent involvement, citizen involvement, voucher education, accountability, minimum competency testing, and an array of other topics keeps coming up on my radar screen. The opportunity to not just talk with legislators, but to come to a conference like this and to hear actual grass roots problems reminds me that I have a fourteen year-old and a twelve year old, and that I, too, am a parent with a vast array of problems working with a local school district, trying to make sense of a parent-teacher conference. As parents, we come up with lots of mixed emotions and views of this whole thing.

The mood at the state level, at this point, is not to go into a number of new areas with state legislation. For example, in Illinois, Washington, California, Minnesota, the legislators are saying, "No new legislation until we get everything implemented and paid for that's on the books already." The mood is not to dive into a number of new areas. Looking through our list of legislation dealing with parent involvement and parent participation from 1971 to 1979, I would say eighty to ninety percent of it dealt with the implementation of P.L. 94-142 or some other federally-funded program. The idea that state legislation would set an arena that would allow parent conferencing or home-school alliances to work better has not really happened.

Now the question of should it happen and will it happen is a good one. There are a number of things parked right out there on the horizon

that are going to come over at us from the state level within the next few years.

The reason I added "what might happen no matter what we do" is related to proposals for voucher education. You see, if nothing happens with home-school alliances, if nothing works, then the court of last resort will be the legislatures; attempts will be made to modify voucher proposals this way or another way so that some form will eventually pass. I don't want to hold out a fear of that, but I think that, if the legislature is going to get involved, it will be on a funding or governance level. It would be very difficult for a legislator to have sat through these two days of conferences and be able to say what policy needs a law would help.

People say, "we need money." We could go to South Carolina and California and look at something mandated in the School Finance Act called Parent Advisory Groups, where the budget is actually constructed at the school site, passed to the local board of education and then on up to the state board, and the whole thing is funded that way. That could increase. We could ask that states do more of that, but then again, that moves us to more centralization and the current mood is not in that direction.

Another area of need that we've heard over and over is teacher training. I would add to it administrator training. The mediator or facilitor role proposed by Stephen Rollins' small group would probably be the administrator. I spent eight days with the National Committee for Citizens in Education's hearings around the country on Who Controls Public Education. I have worked at the local district level as a teacher; I've worked at the state level, and now I'm with a national orgmization. One of my golden opportunities

was to spend three days in Louisville, Kentucky in the heyday of Newman Walker. He operated as a "shuttle diplomat." He had a phone in the car and never went to the office. He just went from one building to another, from one parent group to another. If they needed five gallons of white paint, he saw to it that they got it. If that's what they want, that's what they got. We've never really trained administrators to perform this kind of role very well. In fact, until you have seen it operate in a district, you can't know what kind of legislation is needed to support that. Perhaps we need to change the state definition of the school board in some states so that we can create a very local board of education. In other states, if you read between the lines, it may be possible to establish local building school boards and let them report back to the big school board.

I think parents could get involved in a number of other ways. Collective bargaining has come up on the scene several times where we have been getting bargaining in a "gold fish bowl," where the offers are made out in the open, or where parents are given an equal voice with teachers and school boards.

The role of the legislature in the next decade with probably be increasingly more like that of a traffic cop standing in the middle, trying to even out the demands from two sides: teachers vs board of education; collective bargaining, federal demands for program implementation vs money available, etc.

As we look into the future let's not put on blinders because there may be many, many ways to approach the whole issue of home-school alliances. One of them came up just recently at our annual meeting. Our governor-elect, Governor Graham of Florida, made the suggestion to all of our ECS Commissioners (who are legislators, teachers, parents, state board members, and others) that what they ought to do is go back

and spend a day or week in the classroom as a teacher. That reminded me of something I did way back called the ASCD Shadow Study.

We did a study of junior high school students back in about 1960. We spent the whole day putting our eyes on any student walking off a bus and every ten minutes writing down what we thought that student was doing and what he or she was accomplishing. We did not tell anyone what we were doing even though they knew we were going to be around that day. We spent all ten minutes following one individual and I have never been so tired in all my professional life!

I have been a junior high teacher, assistant principal in a high school, and I've lived by the rules: five minutes between classes; don't stand up by your lockers; don't be tardy. It suddenly dawned on me how tired I was at the end of the day. My friends were saying, "Chris, I want to talk to you." "I can't, I've got to move on to the next class."

The ASCD Shadow Study was written up in a national publication. I would recommend it to sensitize people. Sensitizing has been identified as a major need at this Conference. How do we sensitize board members, legislators, and others? Maybe we ought to dust off the old ASCD Shadow Study and see if it couldn't be recreated. What happened to us is that we understood junior high students much better. If we are trying to sensitize teachers, and parents, and others, I think that is an awfully good way to do it.

Cesar Ramirez, Associate Director, Advocates for Children

I am with Advocates for Children. I am training coordinator and the training I do with parents is called empowerment. A lot of people feel very queasy about that term "empowerment," but that is exactly what it is. Empowerment of parents is to give them the power to be able to get themselves involved in the school process and to give them enough gumption to really do it. We do this because most of the parents are threatened, frightened, or at least very nervous about becoming involved with the school.

We still are caught in the old tradition of concepts of the "professionals" and the "parents" being on two different levels. We want to try to get over that by informing parents about the whole educational system, what they can do when their children are suspended, when the principal says you cannot look at school records, or when the teacher says you cannot come into my classroom. This is empowerment, and this is what we do.

When I was with ASPIRA of New York, I was working with a federally funded program under Title VII, called The Parent Training Institute. The Parent Training Institute worked beautifully. And just when we were ready to get parent groups formed, the federal funding was cut. We learned later that after three years federal funding is very hard to get. We found that out through bitter experience and I know that many of you know about it because you have been in the same boat.

We have to look to the future. We must change the whole concept within federal programs that after three years you should be able to go on your own and develop your own program. That doesn't happen. Let's hope that we can change those federal regulations in the near future so that we will be able to create programs which get parents interested and will be able to go for a longer period of time than three years. People are still asking me "Aren't you with ASPIRA anymore?" "No, I was put on unemployment after three years." "Do we still have parent training?"

"No, we don't have parent training and I don't know what happened to those parents."

We did have one success story. One of the parents in the ASPIRA parent training institute became a school board member. I don't know what happened to the rest of them because they were in the stage of formation when the federal program was cut.

What makes a program like the Peralta program work? I was super-impressed with that program. I thought it was fantastic beause the parents were given an actual role. Like Virginia Sparling says, "Parent involvement can be lip service." But, in the case of Peralta, it really works. That is fantastic. What makes it work? First of all the personnel. In most cases, not everybody is geared in the same direction. The Peralta staff support parent involvement.

I was talking with the Peralta representatives and they said that if a teacher feels that the reason we have parental involvement is to get the money for the proposals, we should let them know ahead of time that this is not the purpose of parental involvement here. We tell the staff the purpose of parental involvement is much, much deeper than that. We want parents to become involved so they can tell us the best way to reach their children. The parent is a professional, a fact we seem to forget. The parent knows the child better than anybody else.

Another reason the Peralta program became such a success was because it had freedom of direction. Freedom of direction gave parents and staff a feeling of importance and a lot of "pull." They could see their ideas through. They could assess how they were working and which way it should go when they started meeting obstacles. Freedom of direction helped them to go whichever way they felt was best to overcome the obstacles.

The Peralta program also benefitted from a lack of bureaucratic involvement. By lack of bureaucratic involvement I mean that they did not become a program of the board of education. They were linked to a board of education, but did not receive their directives from the board of education which would have turned their individual effort into a bureaucratic concept. If they were to become a bureaucratized, governmental board of education project, they would probably fail as a lot of the others have.

When programs enlarge, a lot of things go into them which should not be there. It's smallness which many times makes home-school alliances work. When you extend it, you generalize. You bring a lot of other principles and a lot of other issues into it that eventually will make the program fail. And it will. But if you keep it small, then it's bound to succeed, because the people in it are directly concerned with that community and its problems. They will, among themselves, be able to work things out. Once you enlarge it, forget it!

A program can become a model. The reputation of that program can lead to its being generalized without putting it under a bureaucratic unbrella. Parents are turned on by individuality of their program. This is the key ingredient I have found in many successful cases. We saw that each program presentation at this conference included people who were in the program and were committed to that program. That's why that program worked.

You can replicate it, but not under an umbrella. You've got to replicate it as separate programs within the needs of each community. Only in that sense will it work where programs are kept small and

responsive to the needs of a community. Therefore, if you replicate the program, you've got to change it. You cannot say that this is the program that we are going to put on for everybody. Programs must meet the needs of individual communities.

I want to say a few things about advocacy because advocacy is a need. You have got to advocate, not only for better education, not only for better programs, but you have got to advocate for parent involvement. You cannot expect to take a group of parents, bring them in and say we are going to work together. You've got to get those parents ready first. Thats what Maria Elena Betancourt was describing in the San Antonio program. She had to talk to the parents and advocate for better conditions in the school, advocate against suspensions, advocate for more involvement of parents in curriculum. Nobody knows exactly what can happen in your community, with your people. That is what you have to advocate for.

Virginia Sparling, President, National Parent Teacher Association

The first thing I want to say, standing here before you is that if I had a sign I would put it on my chest and say "I am a parent." One begins to get an uncomfortable feeling when they are analyzed, synthesized, taken apart, and put together. It's hard to get a feel of one's identity. At this moment, I find that I can relate very closely with the adolescents and the assumptions that we make about adolescents.

The National PTA represents more than six million parents across the United States in 50 Congresses plus the one in Washington, D.C. and one in Europe, who are involved in working to identify and resolve issues that affect and impact the lives of children and youth. We need to look not only at the developmental issues for adolescents but also at the developmental issues for adults. We might even take another look and do some rethinking of the developmental issues of teachers and school administrators.

Several words have come to me out of this confernece as I've head you speak. The first word that came to me was "integration." Priscilla Hilliard said it a few moments ago when she asked whether the programs presented at this confernece are known out there in the field. We would hope they were and I would hope that you would know about our programs. But what kind of a mechanism do we have to allow this information to come to our attention? How much do you know about the Urban Education Project of the National PTA, which has involved thousands of people in six urban cities across the nation, which involved two hearings for young people where adolescents had the opportunity to come and talk about what was going on in their school? How many of you know about the PTA's television project in which our large "traditional" organization took on the television networks because we were concerned about the

impact of gratuitous violence on the lives of kids? We need to have some mechanism so that this information can be shared.

I want to talk a little bit about the politics of conflict versus the politics of collaboration and cooperation. This has been talked about in this meeting and it is obvious that, if we continue to hone-up our politics of conflict we will never get to the point where we want to be. With all of the organizations that are involved, in home-school alliances, we do have mutual concerns. There are mutual threads through all of our programs and we must identify these and make the very most of that particular way of working.

Given that parents want information and that we need to understand how to build learning capacity, we need to know what the successes are in various programs. How do we get to the parents with that kind of sequential information? How do we as parents receive the information? Do we have access to the school? Do we have access to the people who make the schools work? And, as it was talked about earlier in Steve Rollins' comments, there are overlapping groups within the community. We have to look at the role of each group and see where the give is so that, from time to time, our rules may change. Today we may play one role and tomorrow we may play another. But underlying this is a general purpose for which we are involved.

We have to take a look at what the expectations are of those particular roles. It was good to hear the different parent roles defined: advocate; decision maker; performer of special tasks; part of the staff program; supporter; tutor; and audience. When the discussion this morning got to the decision maker and advocate role, there was some uneasiness in the room. Parental involvement is given much lip service and we talk about it in great detail. Yet, there is much rhetoric and when it comes down to actually implementing programs that do indeed

involve parents, we are way down on the bottom of the slate. I would suspect that if we counted all of the parent groups in the country, we might reach 50,000, perhaps 75,000. But that is not doing too well. We should be able to make a great deal more impact than that if we really want to provide quality education for our kids.

We have to look at our involvement as decision-makers and the level of involvement the schools want. We have to look at all of the factors surrounding our involvement. We also have to look at why our involvement is wanted. There are other ways of looking at why and how parents are involved. We must look at things from an economic perspective, from an educational perspective, from a sociological perspective and from a political perspective.

Previous speakers pointed out that parents are needed to help pass bond issues. That's exactly right. The schools need our help to pass the bond issues and we are glad to do that. But we also want to be part of the decision-making process as that has, to do with the issues and the design of programs within our schools. We want to play these roles as decision-makers, and we will continue to be advocates.

I want to talk about the future for just a moment. We do need a clearinghouse. We need to look at government policy and whether it really benefits our parent organizations and home-school alliances in the immediate or in the long-range. Is the policy only rhetoric? Do we get the visibility that we need when the schools say that parental involvement is important? In involving parents, are traditional or other organizations represented? What benefits would result if national policy said that parental involvement is necessary?

New training models for the future must be designed, training models not only for teachers, but models that will include teachers, administrators, and parents working as a team. When you all speak the

same language, and you are on the same deck, then the ship will really float.

Pat Weiler, American Federation of Teachers

You may know that the American Federation of Teachers represents the largest number of teachers in urban areas. We do have some rural and suburban areas where our members are affiliated, but on the whole we are concentrated in the urban areas and also in higher education. One of the things we see is that the strengthening of the home-school alliance is really a survival issue for public education and survival for the public school teacher.

We also see that the parent and the teacher together are really almost like the words of the song "...you and me against the world". You will see this reflected in many of the statements by our leadership.

Some of the things that I've heard said about teachers and some of the things that formerly happened are no longer true. I encourage you to go back to teachers and to teacher unions just to check to see if, in fact, basic assumptions still remain the same today as they did yesterday, or two or three months ago, or two or three years ago. I taught in Detroit before I took this position, and I understand the constraints that teachers as well as parents and administrators are up against. I applaud the idea of looking at school structures because I taught in a middle-magnet school when it was established. I also taught at a Junior High School. They were geographically about a half a mile apart. But, as far as configuration or structure was concerned, they were like yesterday and today.

One of the things I would like to raise is the concern that we have over access to the school. I heard the comment being made about the openness of the San Antonio schools but I am sure that, if you go to Detroit or Chicago, there would be no way that you would be able to get in without identification, or that you would ever be able to get in just any door. This is for the security of the students as well as for the teachers. As a teacher, I remind you of the obstacles that continue to be placed in the teacher's path as he or she tries to continue to work wtih students and work with parents.

The school violence and the budget cuts are among the things that affect us and affect the strength of the alliances we keep trying to forge. I urge you again to look at the basic assumptions. If you follow a teacher around, think about the amount of strength and enthusiasm one must have to go from 8:30 until 3:00 or 4:00 in some schools and think about ways of working with teachers.

I would like to look more carefully at how to channel the resources of the teacher organizations to foster home-school alliances. Recently, the United Federation of Teachers in New York supported the Dial-a-Teacher Program. I know that is not new, but what is new is that the teachers themselves funded this project for a year. They served 17 schools and parents and students from those schools were able to call and get in touch with different teachers.

Out of that grew the concern that parents wanted to be more involved. They developed a proposal and were funded under the basic skills program, and Dial-a-Teacher has become a parent outreach program where one of the things we are concerned about is the real involvement

of parents in decision-making. Parents will be involved in the development of a newsletter. They will be involved in the development of the materials that are sent out, and the evaluation of those materials.

The teachers' union can be a resource. I suggest that, as you plan your programs, you go to the local teacher union, not last but first, to ask for teacher involvement.

When I hear conflict resolution and creative problem-solving I think those are the things we need to use as we plan. I know that individual persons may not be receptive to parent involvement, but, as an organization, we are trying to move more in that direction. Word may not have gotten out to some places but strengthening home-school alliances is one of the top priorities for the American Federation of Teachers.

As for parents and teachers being involved in decision-making, I am not sure that you are aware that many teachers are not involved in the development of curriculum or in curriculum decision-making. In some places, where you have an agressive and assertive teacher organization teachers are involved. But there are many places where parents and teachers must implement programs on which they had no opportunity to make a decision. Try to support, especially in the grades four through nine, teachers being involved as well.

I heard over and over again that perhaps teachers are afraid to have parents come in to the classroom, or that teachers are not used to it. I would like to go back to yesterday when Virginia High was setting up the slide-tape presentation and there was about a four or five minute waiting period. If there was a five minute lull in a sixth or seventh grade classroom you know what would happen. Now, if I had two or three parents who were working with me or who were observing, I could imagine what their observation

or remarks would have been. Teachers may be hesitant to have parents in the classroom. Perhaps this is true because the basic relationship has not been established. If we can set up that relationship, that readiness, that awareness, the kind of environment in which parents and teachers can work together, then I think we can get over the fears that will arise.

I work with teacher centers. They are probably one of the most promising programs that you could imagine as far as this alliance is concerned. The "Dial a Teacher" project in New York started because teacher centers are really dealing with the needs of the local teacher. They assess teacher needs through surveys, and ask teachers to identify their priorities.

Many of the surveys collected in many teacher centers said that one of the top priorities was and is how to work with parents and how to involve parents in programs. Parents are asking to be involved in the teacher center program with teachers (not a separate training program, but with teachers) on the very things we are talking about here: how to challenge adolescent students intellectually and how to challenge them increative problem-solving?

In-service programs can be a way that parents and teachers are brought together. The American Federation of Teachers is supporting the idea of a five-year training program for teachers. The beginning teacher would have a fifth year where the important emphasis is the practical application of the things that the teacher has learned. The master teacher and beginning teacher can work together in the teacher center and in the classroom and successful ideas will continue to spring up and can then be shared.

The beginning of a change will take place when higher education faculty and teacher training institutions have an opportunity to learn about home-school

Alliance programs so that this whole philosophy would be infused into all of the curriculum for teacher education. I do not see a difficulty arising for the beginning teacher from the veteran teacher because the veteran right now is trying to search out new ways to be more involved with parents and to have parents strengthen and reinforce the instructional program.

In conclusion, a parent/teacher partnership is a reality. One tangible result of parent-teacher cooperation was published within the last month. The book is called Your Child can be a Super Reader. It was done by a teacher with some parents. It is a step-by-step process, very much in line with what Virginia High was talking about. It uses local and home materials in order to reinforce. What the AFT is trying to do is to not hide behind a mask of professionalism. We are striving to make the profession of teaching a responsive profession.

Finally, I strongly reinforce the thrust toward meeting the needs of different kinds of families like single-parent families. It would be very helpful if we could collect as much information as possible about the successful involvement of these persons because this is an area about which we are extremely anxious.

I would like to end with a comment from a recent copy of the New York Amsterdam News "Teachers need to reach out to parents and students for help with classroom problems. They need to educate the family not just the child."

ISSUES FOR PROGRAM DEVELOPMENT

Daniel Safran

Background

The National Institute of Education Conference on Home-School Alliances held in Washington, DC, in October 1980 raised several major questions for the creation of home-school alliances in the upper elementary and junior high grades. This paper will explore some of these issues and suggest programmatic directions to strengthen parent involvement in the education of early adolescents.

The most obvious issue for program development is the need to differentiate our concepts of home-school alliances for grades 4 - 9 from the highly viable models developed for early childhood education. Such differentiation is difficult to achieve because the rationale for parent involvement is substantially the same for both age groups: to create a partnership of parent and educator to enhance the child's education and development. Furthermore, since early childhood education has been able to demonstrate success in efforts to draw parents and educators more closely together, it is hard not to emulate an approach which has proven successful. Nevertheless, the conditions and the "actors" involved are significantly different.

Foremost among the differences are the developmental tasks of the youngsters. These have been described eloquently

by Joan Lipsitz and the small group report made by Naomi Lowinsky. For example, while younger children tend to express overt pleasure at the prospect of parental involvement in their schools or schoolwork, early adolescents are seeking separate identities and feel wary of parental "intrusion" into their private and public worlds.

Major differences can also be seen in the lives and perceived roles of parents. When their children are young, parents have a clear sense of responsibility for overseeing their development and insuring their health, safety and education. Social expectations of parenting serve to reinforce this sense of responsibility. As youngsters enter adolescence, parents face many choices about their involvement in their children's worlds; some autonomy has been proven; some dependency continues; much confusion reigns.

A significant difference also exists in the lives of parents of younger and older children. For the most part, the parents of older children are themselves older. (In fact, as Priscilla Hilliard pointed out, the current trend to delay childbearing is producing an even older parent than in times past.) Along with this difference in chronological age, parents of early adolescents are usually more deeply engaged in the routine of meeting economic and social obligations than are their younger counterparts. Many of these obligations may derive from (1) the consequences of mothers' entering or returning

to the workforce, divorce or remarriage, (2) various kinds of mobility directly affecting the relationship between parent and child, and (3) the reduced amount of time the parent may have for involvement in the child's education.

Finally, the nature of formal education for early adolescents differs dramatically from the experience of younger children. Beginning at the middle schools or junior highs, youngsters find themselves moving from room to room, dealing with teachers, counselors, and administrators with specialized functions, and receiving instructions and directions from a multitude of persons with a multitude of values and styles. Parents, who may have adjusted to or been involved in preschool or the lower grades, find themselves confused by the complexity of the educational system and the more demanding nature of the academic materials for which their children are responsible.

Generalizations About Parent Involvement

Rather than attempt to develop models for home-school alliances given the differences described above, it may be more valuable to start first with the few generalizations about parent involvement which make sense and then recognize specific approaches which work well in the upper elementary and junior high grades.

Obstacles

The most pervasive obstacle to parent involvement is the sense parents have that they are not needed and not wanted. The second major obstacle is parents' feeling that, even

if they were needed or wanted, they are not competent to help educate their children. These feelings of exclusion and incompetence are complex and are not easily subject to elimination. They differ among parents and are characterized by a high level of ambivalence. These attitudes are the product of many factors including personal experience in school, in life or with ones children's schools; cultural values regarding the role of parents and the relationship between parents and child-serving institutions; social group values regarding participation, trust and the role of the schools.

Another major obstacle to parent involvement is the fact of parents' exclusion from certain educating roles in their children's schools. For years, professional educators have made it clear that they and they alone can do the job of education. In some cases parents received a clear message that their job was not to try to be the child's teacher. In most cases, the message was unclear; parents felt that teachers had "an attitude" which said, "Keep out!" Sometimes exclusion was accomplished via bureaucratic processes: withholding of information; scheduling appointments during times inconvenient for parents; requiring check-in and building pass procedures which gave parents a sense that they were intruders.

Supports

Given both the sense and fact of parental exclusion from the

formal education of their children, what circumstances or conditions tend to support home-school alliances? The first seems to be giving parents, teachers and students a clear message that the alliance is valuable to all parties. Each of these parties may have to receive the message in different ways. Moreover, while the needs and fears of each party must be acknowledged and dealt with, it is critical that parents, teachers and students be engaged in working out a process at the local school site level. From an administrative point of view, the issue is not whether or not there will be home-school alliances, but how they will come about and what form they will take. In other words, while school personnel must receive clear directions toward including parents, it should then be left to staff, parents and students at the school site to develop the uniquely responsive form the local alliance will take.

Another condition vital to the creating of viable home-school alliances is the competence of teachers to work with parents. The dynamics of parent-teacher communication are highly complex and demanding. Suffice to say here that when teachers are abrasive, arrogant, uninviting or even merely unresponsive, parents tend to be deeply affected. When teachers possess knowledge of the pressures of parenting and the diverse family lifestyles of a community, when they have skills in communicating effectively and transmitting educational information clearly, when they can demonstrate

their interest in and caring for the young people they teach, then parents will not only feel at ease in the presence of their children's teachers, but will want to ally with them fully.

Finally, there is a great need for schoolpeople and parents to recognize the individuals behind the roles. Parents and school staffs are under heavy pressure to objectify one another, particularly in large, urban school systems because the systems are usually centralized and bureaucratized and defy attempts at individualization. Very few people enjoy being treated mechanically; yet parents and teachers constantly share in that experience and, under these circumstances, efforts to form or sustain alliances are thwarted.

Successful Approaches

Changing the "Climate of Opinion"

What approaches seem to work well in creating home-school alliances for the upper elementary and junior high school years? One approach which has been productive has been to attempt to change the "climate of opinion" about parent involvement in the formal education of their early adolescent children. The local program presentations at the conference described several ways of reexamining basic assumptions about home-school alliances: 1) using the media, 2) working directly with parents to meet their needs or to "prepare them for involvement," and 3) developing strong

relationships between school staff and parents to overcome stereotypes and negativity. No one claimed that these efforts alone create alliances; it is more likely that they chip away at the forces which keep parents and teachers from working together. Moreover, public understanding of the need for home-school alliances in the upper elementary and junior high years seems to increase as more and more examples of it become known; a cumulative effect is required to overcome the prevailing sense that such alliances are either inappropriate or unnecessary.

Focus on Mutually Agreed Upon Issues

Another approach has been to focus on a specific aspect of educational life the value of which is well understood by parents, teachers, and students alike. The emphasis can be on basic skills like reading, English language acquisition, and math or other developmental activities like athletics, creative arts, or the debate club. Where parents and teachers are able to agree from the outset that their alliance will have a specific and measureable payoff, greater commitment appears likely to occur.

Several of the program presentations were able to attribute their beginnings to a single issue or local "crisis." While no one suggested that a crisis be created in order to forge an alliance, participants were urged to recognize the ways in which such occurrences can shake off inertia and enable

people to work together. Public education has more than its share of crises; there is a great need for educators and community service personnel to understand community development processes in order to draw strength from adversity.

Future Directions

Ironically, we need to look into the past for viable approaches to build and sustain home-school alliances for grades 4 - 9. Contemporary efforts to involve parents of early adolescents in their children's schools have been attempts to outflank the alienation and distance felt by most parents, and by teachers and parents toward each other. In an earlier time community life was a more prominent feature of the social experience of adults and youngsters. The schools were a major part of the community and parents and other adults found the schools places to celebrate. In urban areas, when schools began to take on major acculturating functions, schoolpeople and parents found themselves separated and estranged. The processes of separation have been abetted by the growing centralization, bureaucratization and professionalization of public education to the point that we now find schools as places where parents are rarely seen, no less involved. While contemporary efforts to create alliances may achieve a small percentage of parent involvement over a short period, it may be far more valuable to strengthen the relationship between the school and the community at large and to revise our notions of parent and teacher roles.

To create a sense of community at the upper elementary and junior high levels requires several areas of intervention. First, bring teacher and administrator preparation in line with current needs and policies supporting home-school alliances. Second, assist parents and teachers already involved at the preschool and early elementary levels to see the importance of continuing the alliance, albeit in different forms, as the children grow older. Third, make greater use of the mass media which influences our lives. Fourth, provide parents, educators and students with opportunities to work together in solving problems and making meaningful decisions.

Teacher and Administrator Education

Every one of the local program presentations pointed to the need for teachers and administrators to learn how to work with parents. The same concern was expressed by small groups and panelists. It is shocking that after almost two decades of national emphasis on parent involvement in education, little change has taken place in preparing educators to work with parents.

Educators need to learn about contemporary parenting issues, changes in the family and the variety of cultures and lifestyles represented by the youngsters they teach. Teachers and administrators need to learn to communicate with parents, to transmit educational information to them, to interpret students' academic achievements or deficiencies, and to

engage parents in the educational process by drawing upon home, school and community resources. While the acquisition of skills in working with parents is highly desirable, the lack of such skills continues to be a major obstruction to the creation of home-school alliances.

Continuity Between Early Parent Involvement and the Upper Grades

There is a tendency for teachers in the lower elementary grades to look askance at their colleagues in the upper grades. And, worse, elementary school teachers tend not to look at the junior high school at all. While this creates obvious problems in articulation from a curricular point of view, it also helps to extinguish the spark of home-school alliance nurtured when children are young.

There have been significant increases in parent involvement in early childhood education (ECE) during the past quarter century. Though recent economic conditions have increased the number of mothers in the workforce, a clear consciousness exists that there is value in parent involvement in the education of young children. At the present time, parents who are involved feel as though they are approaching a precipice when their children enter fourth grade. The message from the school is, "Soon, the children will be on their own, learning more complex things and needing far less from you than they have." We need to change this

message to one which emphasizes the importance of continuity, concern and involvement.

Parents and educators both need to learn more about adolescent development. The opportunity exists in ECE programs to provide that learning and develop home-school alliance strategies at the same time. As the tasks of adolescence are studied and discussed, teachers and parents of adolescents can achieve new understanding of how to best work together. It may even be possible for parents and teachers in early childhood education to create alliances which will bring about needed institutional changes in the upper elementary and junior high program.

Greater Use of the Mass Media

The power of television cannot be overestimated in affecting our values and behavior. Since the processes of programming, production, and broadcasting are never neutral (they always carry the values of creators and/or management), it is essential that we examine what messages television provides about homes, schools, adolescents, community life and their interrelationships. Moreover, television may be a more important means of communicating school-related information than notes or meetings at the schoolhouse.

There are many more media resources available for parents and educators than have been used. Public Service Announcements, "talk shows," Youth News, and old fashioned news releases

are only a few of the ways that the home-school alliance message can get across.

Team Building Through Local Decision Making

As important as teacher education, ECE-junior high articulation and the media are for creating home-school alliances in the early adolescent years, none of these are sufficient to sustain such alliances without the building of a team effort at the local school level. The relationships established by parents and teachers working together on problem-solving and local decision making can be sustained over many years by focusing on improving achievement and, at the same time, advocating for improvements in the schools to which the children will go next. The key seems to be the establishment of a mutually acceptable forum in which parents and educators have equal voice and mutual respect.

To establish such a forum requires time and some real decision-making authority. First of all, parents and teachers need opportunities to experience trust in one another's motives and commitments. These opportunities may best come about through social or non-threatening activities such as traditional carnivals, potlucks, or children's performances where the adult participants are helped to break-the-ice and meet each other on terms beyond their obvious roles as "teacher" or "parent." Secondly, in order to maintain the interest of parents and teachers, all of whom are usually very busy and have other priorities,

it is important to give significance to the functions they perform when they are working together. Many school programs provide significant responsibilities via federal, state, district and school-based policies. For example, federal Title I requirements provide parents and teachers with budgetary review and decision-making authority. Various school district policies often involve parents and teachers in school design, textbook selection and principal appointment processes. With these experiences as a foundation, parents and school staff can work out such arrangements as elected parent-teacher committees which propose ways to enhance the curriculum or recommend candidates to fill teacher vacancies. The result of these joint activities is to give meaning to parents and staff working together. A combination of decision-making activities with academic enhancement, classroom and schoolwide newsletters, social activities and frequent events celebrating the children provides "something for everyone" and creates an atmosphere which is productive and inviting.

By no means will home-school alliances be created in which all parents participate, nor will it be possible to create "one, big, happy family" at every school. Yet, by struggling over significant issues and building a sense of teamwork, energy can exist where once there was apathy and alienation. To the extent that this energy is directed toward enhancing the educational environment of the school, the home and the community, the children will continue to benefit.

APPENDIX A

Salient Features of Local Programs

Peralta Year-Round School - Oakland, California

Cynthia Harris, Acting Principal
Karen Boyden, Parent

Emphasis: Parent as Co-planner

Objective: To involve parents and staff in problem solving and program implementation. Emphasis is on individualized instruction, multiage grouping multi-cultural curriculum, and a year- round school schedule.

Parent Role: To extend educational improvement beyond the immediate school experience via miniclasses and shared planning with junior high school and the school district administration.

Delivery System: Mini-courses, classes for parents on helping children read; parent group is incorporated and gives financial support to school needs; parents participate in School improvement Program .

Office of Citywide Reading, Home Curriculum Program - Detroit, Michigan

Virginia High. Project Director
Dolores Modock, Parent

Emphasis: Parent as Tutor and Child Socializer

Objective: Upgrade reading skills of parents and students; make parents more aware of their children's developmental needs.

Parent Role: Parent as remedial reading teacher at home

Delivery System: School provides specifically prepared material, a parent room, paraprofessional Home Curriculum Assistants, and workshops for parents (e.g., parenting and reading skills)

Parents Can Be Tutors Program - Miami, Florida

Arturo Rio, Project Director
Zenaida Moreno, Parent

Emphasis: Parent of parents in helping students raise competency scores.

Objective: Involvement of parents in helping students raise competency scores.

Parent Role: Bilingual parents as learner and tutor for state-wide language competency test.

Delivery System: Parents voluntarily come to school with their children two nights a week to learn test requirements and how to tutor their children for the test.

Home-School Basic Skills Program -Arlington, Virginia

Betty Ann Armstrong, Project Director
Alberta Carpenter, Home Liaison
Audrey Shivers, Parent

Emphasis: Parent as Tutor and Educational Manager

Objective: Prepare for competency testing to be introduced state-wide.

Parent Role: Home tutor or manger of their child's involvement in tutoring activities arranged in community settings.

Delivery System: People are hired by the school to work with parents. Program targeted at individual student's needs based on observation in school.

Bilingual Training Institute for Parents, San Antonio, Texas

Maria Elena Betancourt, Project Director
Cristina Garcia, Parent

Emphasis: Parents as Tutors and Co-planners

Objective: Finding solutions to home, school and community problems, i.e., achievement, school attendance, and threat of loss of cultural identification.

Parent Role: Parents as teachers of their own children, as resources to teachers, and as contributors to curriculum development by creating and using culturally relevant materials.

Delivery System: The Bilingual Training Institute for Parents provides parents with training and orientation to school programs and school curriculum. Workshop focus includes the following-language or communication barriers between parent and teacher; lack of success models for parent involvement; other barriers to home-school coordination.

Appendix B

Some questions about the five local programs raised during the conference, and afterward, could not be answered by all projects in a uniform way while the conference was under way. The NIE sponsors decided to request further comments from each project director on the most important of these questions after the conference. What follows are the questions and their written responses.

1. Oakland, CA.: Peralta Year Round School

1. How can home-school alliance programs make creative use of space in schools which is becoming available due to declining enrollments?

They could offer classes for staff, parents, community on basic skills, esl, crafts, recreational activities. Space could be used during day-time hours for preschool, before and after school child care programs for working and student parents. Space could be used for recreational and out-patient health care for senior citizens. The schools could really become the center of community activities.

2. What kinds of parents get involved in your programs?

Parents who feel comfortable, i.e., not threatened in the school environment. Parents who feel a particular sense of duty and commitment to the program offered at Peralta (and perhaps have gone through some effort to get the child enrolled at the school.)

3. How do you reach and work with working mothers and other families where time is short?

By offering activities in the evening and weekends. Providing things for parents to do at home.

4. How much emphasis does your program place on low achieving students?

Because of the uneven nature of the funding, our program places a great deal of emphasis on the low achieving student. The problem has always been to involve the parents of these low achievers.

5. What techniques do you use to reach and involve parents who have low literacy skills?

By personal contact — by phone, in person. Try to encourage these parents that what they can do and what they have to offer is valuable.

6. What kind of assistance does your program provide to families under stress or with serious health and welfare needs?

The nurse health assistant works with the teacher, administrator and other district-provided personnel to aid families in particular need.

7. What has been your experience in seeking local school board funds to operate your programs?

The local school board has always been very supportive of our program. The problem has been that the district administrative bureaucracy has been a disparate body from the board. The district bureaucratic set-up does not operate on a year-round basis, and therefore is not sensitive or understanding of our school's particular needs.

2. Detroit, MI: Home Curriculum Program

1. How can home-school alliance programs make creative use of space in schools which is becoming available due to declining enrollments?

There is a Parent Activity Room in most of the middle schools. This room contains a wide variety of materials in such areas as reading skills, practical life skills, parenting skills, community resources, and testing information.

These materials are available for home use on a loan basis. Home Curriculum Assistants are available to assist parents. The room is also used for workshops, meetings, and conferences with parents.

Utilization of the materials and services provides:

... an opportunity for parents to become involved in their children's educational process

... parents with skills and strategies to assist their children in reading and effective communication

... materials which can be used by parents to support the educational program in the middle schools

... parents with an area where they communicate with each other and

... parents an opportunity to upgrade their reading and communication skills.

2. What kinds of parents get involved in your programs?

Since our target student population is assigned by the local school administrators, we are working with parents with a wide range of social-economic status and values.

We find that most of the parents we work with are:

- actively participating in community activities
- interested in improving their academic skills
- interested in assisting their children in the learning process.

3. How do you reach and work with working mothers and other families where time is short?

The following techniques for contacting parents have been successfully utilized:

- Home Visits. This kind of personal contact establishes a very positive and constructive relationship between home and the school. This should be a scheduled meeting with parents.

- Parent Teams. Parents of our target students, who are already involved in the Home Curriculum Activities, are recruited to contact other parents. This is another successful technique.

- Workshops. Another technique for involving parents is through well-planned workshops. The workshops are conducted in the evenings and Saturdays in local schools, churches and other community facilities.

The workshops introduce parents to multi-level reading and communication skills. These workshops are supplemented by training sessions in whatever topics the parents request. The key concept is that parents should have primary input into determining their own needs for training and convenient schedules.

4. How much emphasis does your program place on low achieving students?

Our target population students are low-achievers. The following strategies have been utilized to successfully reach low-achievers:

... field experiences with parent and student

... individual and small group tutoring

... individual and small group tutoring

... self-awareness, individual and group sessions

... utilize parents as tutors

... special homework assignments

5. What techniques do you use to reach and involve parents who have low literacy skills?

The following techniques have been utilized successfully to reach and involve parents who have low literacy skills:

- Make provisions for families to participate in training sessions by providing stipends and babysitters.

- Conduct academic skills improvement classes for individuals or small groups on a regular basis.

- Arrange for parent workshops to be held outside of school settings to make the sessions more informal.

- Encourage parents to attend adult education classes.

- Establish a place in the local school with instructional materials for parents and children to use at home.

- Support parents and let them know that we believe in them.

6. What kind of assistance does your program provide to families under stress or with serious health and welfare needs?

We provide parents with information and reinforcement through workshops, home visits and conferences concerning the following support services:

Attendance - The methods utilized to provide inservice training include holding parent and student conferences at the school level regarding attendance.

Health Services - The program provides health services to all children. It provides health nutrition education. It provides in service to teachers, parents and students.

Psychological Services - Provides comprehensive psychological evaluation which includes intellectual, social, emotional, sensory, medical and family factors.

7. What has been your experience in seeking local school board funds to operate your programs?

The Home Curriculum Program is funded by the Emergency School Aid Act.

3. Miami, FL. Parents Can Be Tutors Program

1. How can home-school alliance programs make creative use of space in school which is becoming available due to declining enrollments?

By the creation of Parent-teacher-student resource rooms at the school building level and using this room for parent workshops on tutoring, parenting, and developmental activities.

2. What kinds of parents get involved in your program?

Two populations: parents of Hispanic-and Haitian-American school children (elementary and junior high) who have demonstrated difficulty in basic skill acquisition. Description/characteristics of population: newly arrived refugees; non-English speaking; low to low-middle income; primarily unskilled or semi-skilled laborers; lack of knowledge of community (marginal) and involvement in civic activities;

3. How do you reach and work with working mothers and other families where time is short?

Program is offered in the evening (7:00 - 9:00 p.m.).

An accessible location to the population is provided.

Emphasis is placed on the need to become involved, and on the meaning of formal education in America.

Provision of a relevant, concise, and comprehensive program that is child-oriented.

4. How much emphasis does your program place on low achieving students?

The PCBT/ADAPT Program is designed to emphasize the tutoring role of parents in helping their children master minimal basic skills (as defined by the State of Florida) in grades 3, 5, and 8. Participating students have been defined by school and project authorities as "low achieving".

5. What techniques do you use to reach and involve parents who have low literacy skills?

A personal approach--contacting parents individually by phone and in person. Emphasizing the quality of relationship between parents and students, and the importance of establishing regular study habits.

6. What kind of assistance does your program provide to families under stress or with serious health and welfare needs?

Lists of community agencies and services are provided, along with pertinent information (fees, office hours, types of assistance, addresses, phone numbers, etc.). Also, project staff provide individual referral service and follow-up. One social worker is responsible for most referral and case work.

7. What has been your experience in seeking local school board funds to operate your programs?

Program is federally funded. Local funds have been donated for child care services. Schools have contributed PTA/PTO funds for refreshments and incidental expenses.

4. Arlington, VA: Home-School Basic Skills Improvement Program

1. How can home-school alliance programs make creative use of space in school which is becoming available due to declining enrollment?

   The availability of space due to declining enrollment can be used in many ways to strengthen the home-school alliance.

   The Home-School Basic Skills Improvement Program operates a successful peer tutoring program using the available space. Student tutors and tutees meet two to three times a week under the supervision of the home-school liaison. At another school, the available space houses an after-school volunteer tutoring program.

   Students "rap sessions" can be held inside the school. Here students voluntarily meet or are scheduled to meet with the home-school liaison who facilitates discussions concerning social, emotional or academic difficulties. This approach works well at the secondary level. It serves to establish a trust relationship with the student before the home-school liaison enters the home to visit with the parent.

   Available space may also be designed to serve parents. It is a convenient setting for parent training sessions and meetings. For use during the day, the school might donate supplies to set up a "parent room," The parent room becomes a place where parents can come to borrow books, learning games or toys, and meet with teachers, home-school liaisons, and/or principals.

2. What kinds of parents get involved in your program?

   Traditionally those parents who become involved in the Home-School Basic Skills Improvement Program effort already are involved in the PTAs, advisory committee and school councils. These parents usually have had some formal education or training and are financially comfortable. Their literacy skills are average or above and there is evidence in the home of a viable family support system.

   Other parents, although as concerned, are not as inclined to actively participate at the outset. However, after the child has made progress that can be attributed to the parent's input, an increase in participation is seen.

3. How do you reach and work with working mothers and other families where time is short?

The Home-School Basic Skills Improvement Program is structured so that Basic Skills Parent Assistants are available to parents during the evenings and weekends. Home visits are made at the convenience of the parent.

When a parent(s) cannot provide the suggested amount of time to spend with their child, Parent Assistants ask that they monitor the child and check the work. Materials left in the home are those that fit the need of the student and time of the parent. At times, no materials, but suggestions are left with the parents such as; ask your child what he/she did in school today, make sure your child brings his book home, etc.

Students are also referred to community tutoring agencies when the parent's time is limited.

4. How much emphasis does your program place on low achieving students?

Every student receiving service from the Home-School Basic Skills Improvement Program must meet certain criteria such as scoring one or more years below grade level in reading or math standardized tests, or being referred to the reading or math skills center.

5. What techniques do you use to reach and involve parents who have low literacy skills?

Each time materials are left in the home, Parent Assistants demonstrate the materials with the parent, explain the purpose of the materials, and encourage the parent to complete one of the problems or exercises with the Parent Assistant.

In addition, the program offers parent training workshops and sessions on weekends and evenings addressing topics such as "Refreshing your Math Skills", "The Parent/Teacher Conference", "Interpreting Test Results", "How You Can Help Your Child at Home in Reading", and "Communicating with Your Child."

6. What kind of assistance does you program provide to families under stress or with serious health and welfare needs?

The Home-School Basic Skills Improvement Program acts as a referral agency for families in need. If there is a serious need, principals are consulted and, upon approval, an appropriate assisting agency contacted. Usually the Parent Assistant accompanies the parent on the initial visit to the agency.

7. What has been your experience in seeking local school board funds to operate your programs?

From January, 1979 - August, 1979 the Home-School Basic Skills Improvement Program operated under CETA funds.

The Arlington School Board took over the funding in September, 1979 feeling it to be a viable program and a worthwhile investment.

5. San Antonio, TX: Bilingual Training Institute for Parents

1. How can home-school alliance programs make creative use of space in school which is becoming available due to declining enrollments?

   Home-school alliance programs can make creative use of space in school which is becoming available due to declining enrollments by using this space to set up "parent centers". Parent centers can be utilized for parent meetings, training, tutoring, GED and any other number of activities.

2. What kind of parents get involved in your program?

   The majority of parents in our training consist of Mexican American parents with children in Bilingual Programs although we also have monolingual English participants.

3. How do you reach and work with working mothers and other families where time is short?

   Within each of the San Antonio districts we work with we have identified a community liaison who is in close contact with the parents. It is her responsibility to call parents and invite them to meetings. We also have a parent network. Each parent has five names of other parents that they are responsible for contacting. Prior to each meeting and/or training session we also send out notices.

4. How much emphasis does your program place on low achieving students?

   Part of the parent training includes a series of activities to teach parents how to work with their school age children i.e. language arts activities, math.

5. What techniques do you use to reach and involve parents who have low literacy skills? Not applicable.

6. What kind of assistance does your program provide to families under stress or with serious health and welfare needs? Not applicable.

7. What has been your experience in seeking local school board funds to operate your programs? Not applicable.

APPENDIX C

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APPENDIX D.

CONFERENCE AGENDA

CONFERENCE ON
HOME-SCHOOL ALLIANCES

NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF EDUCATION
WASHINGTON, D. C.

OCTOBER 5-7, 1980

SPONSORED BY:

FAMILIES AS EDUCATORS TEAM
HOME, COMMUNITY AND
WORK DIVISION
TEACHING AND LEARNING
PROGRAM, NIE

NIE CONFERENCE

October 5-7, 1980

HOME-SCHOOL ALLIANCES: APPROACHES TO INCREASING PARENT INVOLVEMENT IN CHILDREN'S LEARNING IN UPPER ELEMENTARY AND JUNIOR HIGH SCHOOLS (GRADES 4-9)

Sunday - October 5	Gramercy Inn 1616 Rhode Island Avenue, N. W. Washington, D. C. (202) 347-9550
Monday - Tuesday, October 6-7	Room 823, NIE Building 1200 19th Street, N. W. Washington, D. C.

Schedule

Sunday - October 5

5:30 p.m.	Reception and Cash Bar
6:30	Dinner
7:30	Conference Overview, Dan Safran, Chair* Director, Center for Study of Parent Involvement, San Francisco, California
8:00	Keynote Address* "Impact of Home-School Alliances on Student Learning: Past and Future" - Barbara Hatton, School of Education, Atlanta University
9:00	Adjourn

Monday - October 6 — THEME: PROMISING HOME-SCHOOL PROGRAMS

9:00 - 9:30 a.m. — Introductions

Dan Safran, Conference Chair
Gladys Keith Hardy, Deputy Director, NIE
Berlin Kelly, Assistant Director, Educational Organizations and Local Communities, NIE
Oliver Moles, Leader, Families as Educators Team, NIE

*Omitted from proceedings

LOCAL LEVEL PROGRAMS
(see Guiding Questions for Topics to be Discussed)

9:30 - 10:00

Peralta Year-Round School, Oakland, California

Cynthia Harris, Acting Principal.
Karen Boyden, Parent

Emphasis: Parent as Co-planner

Objective: To involve parents and staff in problem solving and program implementation. Emphasis is on individualized instruction, multi-age grouping, multi-cultural curriculum, and a year-round school schedule.

Parent Role: To extend educational improvement beyond the immediate school experience via mini-classes and shared planning with junior high school and the school district administration.

Delivery System: Mini-courses, classes for parents on helping children read; parent group is incorporated and gives financial support to school needs; parents participate in School Improvement Program.

10:00 - 10:15

Audience Questions

10:15 - 10:30

Break

10:30 - 11:00

Office of Citywide Reading, Home Curriculum Program, Detroit, Michigan

Virginia High, Project Director
Delores Modock, Parent

Emphasis: Parent as Tutor and Child Socializer

Objective: Upgrade reading skills of parents and students; make parents more aware of their children's developmental needs.

Parent Role: Parent as remedial reading teacher at home.

Delivery System: School provides specifically prepared material, a parent room, paraprofessional Home Curriculum Assistants, and workshops for parents (e.g., parenting and reading skills)

11:00 - 11:15

Audience Questions

11:15 - 11:45 — Parents Can Be Tutors Program - Miami, Florida

Arturo Rio, Project Director
Zenaida Moreno, Parent

Emphasis: Parent as Learner and Tutor

Objective: Involvement of parents in helping students raise competency scores.

Parent Role: Bilingual parents as learner and tutor for state-wide language competency test.

Delivery System: Parents voluntarily come to school with their children two nights a week to learn test requirements and how to tutor their children for the test.

11:45 - 12:00 — Audience Questions

12:00 - 1:30 — Lunch Break

1:30 - 2:00 — Home-School Basic Skills Program, Arlington, Virginia

Betty Ann Armstrong, Project Director
Alberta Carpenter, Home Liaison
Audrey Shivers, Parent

Emphasis: Parent as Tutor and Educational Manager

Objective: Prepare for competency testing to be introduced state-wide.

Parent Role: Home tutor or manager of their child's involvement in tutoring activities arranged in community settings.

Delivery System: People are hired by the school to work with parents. Program targeted at individual student's needs based on observation in school.

2:00 - 2:15 — Audience Questions

2:15 - 2:45 — Bilingual Training Institute for Parents, San Antonio, Texas

Maria Elena Betancourt, Project Director
Cristina Garcia, Parent

Emphasis: Parents as Tutors and Co-planners

Objective: Finding solutions to home, school and community problems, i.e., achievement, school attendance, and threat of loss of cultural identification.

Parent Role: Parents as teachers of their own children, as resources to teachers, and as contributors to curriculum development by creating and using culturally relevant materials.

Delivery System: The Bilingual Training Institute for Parents provides parents with training and orientation to school programs and school curriculum. Workshop focus includes the following - language or communication barriers between parent and teacher; lack of success models for parent involvement; other barriers to home-school coordination.

2:45 - 3:00 Audience Questions

3:00 - 3:15 Break

3:15 - 4:45 FEDERAL PROGRAMS

Panel on Federal Parent Involvement Programs: Promising Strategies to Encourage Home-School Alliances

Shirley Jackson, Director, Basic Skills Program
Mary Mahoney, Title VII Bilingual Program Parent Involvement Coordinator
Rita Ray, Emergency School Aid Act
Roland Yoshida, Individual Educational Plans, Bureau of Education for the Handicapped

4:45 - 5:00 Wrap-up and Plans for Tuesday

Tuesday - October 7 THEME: ANALYZING AND DEVELOPING HOME-SCHOOL PROGRAMS

8:45 - 9:00 a.m. Coffee and donuts

9:00 - 10:15 Panel Discussion of Monday's Program Presentations: Implications for Program Development (see Guiding Questions)

Parent and Community

Gladys Knott, Kent State University
Hope Leichter, Teachers College, Columbia University

Child and Adolescent Development

Joan Lipsitz, Center for Early Adolescence, University of North Carolina

Parent-Teacher Communication

Kay Pasley, Washington State University

Schools and School Systems

Larry Cuban, Superintendent, Arlington County (Virginia) Public Schools

10:15 - 10:30 Break

10:30 - 12:00 Small Group Discussions: Resources and Issues for Building Local Home-School Alliances

Guiding Questions

- What capabilities do parents and schools already have?
- What resources do schools need?*
- What resources do parents need?*
- What resources are needed at the start, and what are needed for continuation of programs?
- What are new ways to build alliances with:
  a) available resources
  b) resources that might be made available

*Resources might include:

a) Program aids such as materials, training and technical assistance, special staff positions, and
b) social supports from school staff for the program and for parent involvement.

Facilitators for five small groups are:

Parents

Maria Elena Betancourt, Bilingual Training Institute for Parents, San Antonio, Texas
Theodora Ooms, Family Impact Seminar, Washington, D. C.

Adolescents

Naomi Lowinsky, Marriage, Family and Child Counselor, Oakland, California

Teachers

Joyce Epstein, Center for Social Organization of Schools, Baltimore, Maryland

Schools

Stephen Rollin, Florida State University, Tallahassee, Florida

12:00 - 1:30 Lunch Break

1:30 - 2:45 Small Group Reports and Discussion

2:45 - 3:00 Break

3:00 - 4:45 Directions for the Future: What Can and Should We Do to Develop Local Home-School Alliances to Promote Student Learning?

Panel Discussion

Michael Bakalis, Deputy Undersecretary, Department of Education
Priscilla Hilliard, White House Conference on Families
Chris Pipho, Education Commission of the States
Cesar Ramirez, Director, Advocates for Children
Virginia Sparling, President, National Parent Teacher Association
Pat Weiler, American Federation of Teachers

4:45 - 5:00 Conference Summary

(omitted from proceedings)

GUIDING QUESTIONS FOR HOME-SCHOOL ALLIANCE CONFERENCE

A part of the mission of the National Institute of Education is to help equalize educational opportunity. In keeping with this, NIE's interest in this conference is in home-school alliances to help children who are failing or not achieving well in upper elementary and junior high schools (grades 4-9). The conference will ask how such alliances can help parents support conditions contributing to student achievement. Knowledge of promising parent involvement programs may help build other effective local programs, and pinpoint where additional information and research are needed.

Against this backdrop, a set of questions are proposed for conference consideration:

1. What do we know about the characteristics of promising home-school alliances?

   - program objectives
   - program history and development
   - structure: staffing, modes of home-school contact, program activities
   - communication between home and school
   - roles for parents in encouraging student achievement
   - program resources: materials, training and technical assistance, special staff positions, administrative support, funding sources

2. How successful are the programs in meeting their objectives?

3. What seem to be the most important factors in promoting or limiting success in the following areas:

   - getting the program started
   - getting support from teachers and administrators
   - establishing communication with parents
   - strengthening parent roles in educating their children
   - improving student learning through involving parents
   - keeping the program going

4. What information about home-school alliances would be useful to others setting-up similar programs?

5. How accessible is this information?

   - Where is it located?
   - Is it in a form others can easily use?
   - How widely known is it?
   - How can others be helped to use it?

6. What unanswered questions are there regarding the development, operation, and effectiveness of such programs?

Characteristics of Home-School Alliances

The term alliance draws attention to several features which highlight how parents and teachers or other school staff may coordinate efforts to further their common interest in the social and academic development of children and youth. Unlike terms such as "school responsiveness," "shared responsibility", or "parent involvement" which often have unclear meanings, the term alliance is used here to refer to specific coordination strategies between the home and school. As such, alliances have the following characteristics:

1. Specific program efforts directed toward improving student achievement or closely related behaviors such as attendance, school conduct or study habits.

2. Development of strategies and procedures by schools, parents or community groups to involve parents or other child caretakers in this effort.

3. Finding solutions to time problems and other constraints that educators may face in developing ways of working with parents to strengthen student performance.

4. A two-way flow of information between home and school by which parents and school staff may work together to accomplish the objective of improving the achievement of individual children who are not performing well in school.

5. Creation of new strategies which support roles for parents as educators of their children such as tutors, homework supporters, motivators, coordinators of other educational resources, and co-planners with teachers of the child's educational program.

6. Parents working with their children at home to improve their achievement or related behaviors.

The home-school programs presented at the conference will draw attention to alliance efforts that have been undertaken in various school settings. In each case an alliance has been developed because either the school staff or parents have identified a problem that parent involvement could address, and have worked out specific goals, a delivery system, and parent roles.

Alliances may form in a variety of ways. The school may take the initiative to involve parents, or parents individually or collectively may approach the school. Some would argue that before parents are willing to get involved in alliances they must become organized and have a sense of power in relation to the schools. Others would say that concern for their own children's education is enough to motivate parents to work with schools in educational roles. How frequently and under what conditions these and other factors are necessary preconditions to the development of home-school alliances will be explored during the conference.

Moles, NIE
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